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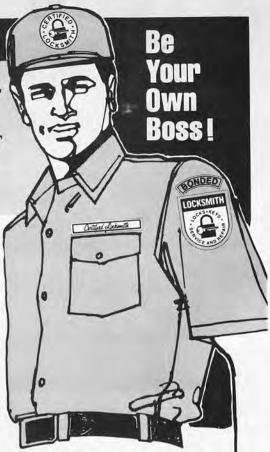
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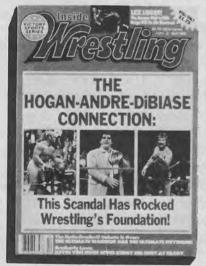
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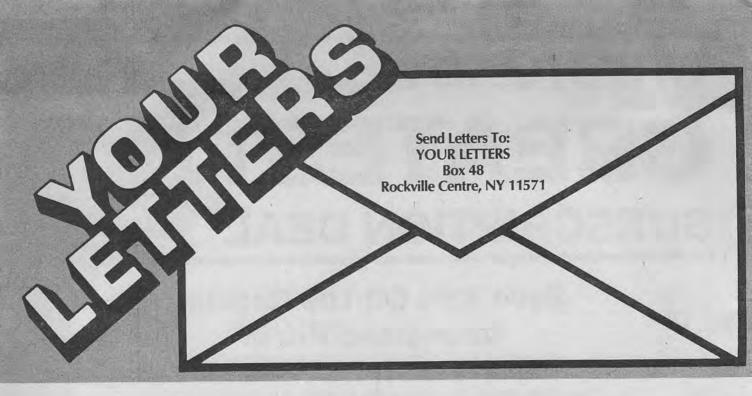
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#### **HURT FOR CURT**

As a longtime wrestling fan, I was more than just shocked at seeing Curt Hennig's face in your "Thumbs Down" rogues gallery (May 1988). In fact, I am appalled at the way your magazine consistently drags the illustrious Hennig name through the mud.

Not only that, but to insult Curt by praising Hulk Hogan is ludicrous! If Hogan wants to run his career by pandering to the trendy new breed of flash-in-the-pan wrestling fans, that's his choice. As far as I'm concerned, Curt's commitment to the wrestling excellence that has become his trademark is not the "classless reaction" you spoke of, but an earnest attempt to be the best grappler he can be.

His disappointment at not being named "Wrestler of the Year" was completely understandable, especially after finding out that he lost that honored position to the gutless Hogan. And since I'm on the topic, just how much longer will Hogan be the pet of the WWF? He's more a cartoon character than a true wrestler, and his very presence in the ring is surely making past greats like Bruno Sammartino and Lou Thesz wonder what the heck they struggled so hard for.



Curt Hennig's arrogant attitude is appreciated by reader Perry Rianhard.

Hogan and his unintelligent "Hulkamaniacs" cheapen the game, day in and day out.

> PERRY RIANHARD Buffalo, NY

#### THE ALL-IDIOT TEAM

I was extremely pleased by your "X-Ray" panel of experts in their assessment of The Ultimate Warrior's lack of intellectual gifts (May 1988). While every member of the diverse group was quick to point out that the Warrior's awesome physical strength represents a significant threat to wrestlers everywhere, they were just as correct in asserting that strength alone won't do Ultimate Warrior a bit of good unless he takes the time to learn the science of the mat game.

If I may be so bold, I'd like to present my picks for the All-Idiot Team of wrestling, guys who are so dumb that they exist more as spectacles rather than genuine grapplers, thus destroying the integrity of wrestling.

1—Andre the Giant. Think Ultimate Warrior is stupid? At least he can speak coherent sentences! The fact that Andre has been able to live profitably for so long proves that America is truly the land of opportunity—for giant idiots.

2—Bam Bam Bigelow. The empty stare, the dripping saliva, the angry eyes of a ruthless stalker. It all speaks to just one thing: overwhelm-

(Continued on page 56)

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NEARLY ONE YEAR after suffering the most damaging defeat of his career—the loss of the WWF Intercontinental title to Rick Steamboat at WrestleMania III—Randy Savage defeated Ted DiBiase for the WWF World heavyweight championship on March 27 at WrestleMania IV.

Savage's victory, which came with more than a little help from former champ **Hulk Hogan**, was his fourth of the day in the WWF's first-ever title tournament before a sellout crowd of approximately 20,000 at the Atlantic City Convention Center. With the fans roaring in approval, Savage lifted **Elizabeth** on his shoulders following the controversial victory.

Savage started out on the road to the title with a brilliant first-round pinfall victory over Butch Reed. "The Macho Man" then disposed of Greg Valentine in the second round before facing one of his toughest tests, the 468-pound One Man Gang, in the semifinals; Savage was awarded that match when Gang was disqualified for whacking him over the head with his manager Slick's cane.

That set up the final-round confrontation with a well-rested DiBiase, who received a bye into the



Randy Savage, with Elizabeth on his shoulders, accepts Hulk Hogan's congratulations.

final when Andre the Giant and Hogan battled to a double-disqualification in their much-anticipated rematch. Andre and Hogan, former friends who have developed an intense hatred for one another, engaged in a brawl for several minutes during which neither wrestler was able to dominate. The match eventually broke out of control when the wrestlers hit each other over the head with chairs. DiBiase wrestled brilliantly in his firstround victory over Hacksaw Duggan and had little trouble with Don Muraco in the second round.

Savage, however, was another story—especially when Elizabeth summoned Hogan from the dressing room early in the final match to offset the presence of Andre in DiBiase's corner. Referee **David Hebner** tried to keep Andre and Hogan from interfering, but "The Hulkster" managed to turn the match to Savage's favor.

Savage, obviously exhausted from his previous three matches, was caught in a DiBiase sleeperhold and appeared ready to pass out when Hebner turned his back to reprimand Andre. Hogan seized the opportunity to run into the ring with his chair and bash DiBiase across the back. By the time Hebner turned around, Hogan had scampered out of the ring and Savage had DiBiase covered for the pin. Three seconds later, a new champ was crowned.

There were other matches of interest on the card, which was beamed live to a national pay-perview and closed-circuit TV audience. Demolition defeated Strike Force for the WWF World tag belts, and The Honky Tonk Man lost to Brutus Beefcake by disqualification, retaining his Intercontinental title—but Beefcake successfully cut some of the hair from the head of Honky Tonk's manager, Jimmy Hart.

(Continued on page 48)



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## REPORTS

Toledo, OH (Correspondent— Jim Downhower): The main event at the Toledo Sports Arena was a very interesting eight-man steel cage match featuring Strike Force, Randy Savage, and Sam Houston against The Hart Foundation, Danny Davis, and The Honky Tonk Man.

As soon as Savage's team entered the cage, they were attacked by Jimmy Hart's men. Honky Tonk choked Tito Santana in one corner with Tito's Strike Force T-shirt while Davis choked Houston with his own bandana. In the other corners, Brett Hart worked over Rick Martel and Jim Neidhart worked on Savage.

The tide quickly turned. At the one-minute mark, Santana and Neidhart both went out the cage door. Thirty seconds later, Houston and Davis both climbed over the top of the cage to the arena floor. This left Martel and Savage battling Honky Tonk and Hart. Martel quickly left the cage, leaving Savage in a two-on-one situation. Hart and Honky Tonk worked over Savage until Hart took advantage of the situation and left the cage.

This left Savage and Honky Tonk alone in the cage. Honky Tonk danced for the crowd, then tried to escape, but Savage stopped him with a series of elbows. Honky Tonk then tried to go over the top of the cage, but Savage stopped him on the top rope. Savage then knocked Honky Tonk to the mat with a powerful elbowsmash and climbed out of the cage to give his team a victory.

In other bouts: Jake Roberts beat Ron Bass by disqualification ... Demolition defeated The Rougeaus ... Dino Bravo pinned Ken Patera ... Ultimate Warrior pinned Harley Race ... Noriyo Tateno beat Lelani Kai ... Itsuki Yamazaki defeated Judy Martin.

Memphis, TN (Correspondent—Chuck Morris): In one of his first CWA matches since returning to Memphis, "Hot Stuff" Eddie Gilbert faced an old nemesis, "Nightmare" Ken Wayne. At ringside for Eddie were Missy Hyatt and Doug Gilbert.

Wayne started out by dodging Gilbert's offensive lunges. Wayne peppered Gilbert with a few short jabs and clamped on a powerful headlock. Gilbert executed a back suplex, but Wayne still maintained the headlock. Gilbert got to his feet and shot Wayne to the ropes, where Missy grabbed his leg and tripped him.

Gilbert then took over the match, battering Wayne with fists, kicks, and headbutts into the turn-



Eddie Gilbert leaps down on Ken Wayne as Missy Hyatt and Doug Gilbert root him on.

buckles. Wayne came back, but made a mistake by going out after Missy. Gilbert mounted the top rope and jumped down on Wayne's head with a big forearm. As Doug Gilbert distracted the referee, Eddie slammed Ken's head into a chair, hit him with a chain, and took the pin.

In other bouts: Prince Samu & Kokina defeated Alan Reynolds & Doug Dansing . . . Jeff Jarrett & Billy Travis beat Tommy & Doug Gilbert by disqualification . . . Ron & Don Bruise beat Max Pain & Gary Young.

(Continued on page 50)

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- Q: "My question is for Nikita Koloff: Now that you've lived in our country for some time, which way of life do you prefer, ours or Russia's?"— Steve Binhak, Angle Inlet, MN
- A: "There is no question that I often miss my homeland," Nikita said. "I sweat very much here in the heat of your summers, but that is minor compared to how much I love my life as an American. For one thing, food here is better. Have you ever had to eat fish head? That is prime cut in many Russian store! Another thing: I don't have to stand on line here as much as in Russia. My life here is very much easier and more pleasant. I get to do what I love to do: wrestle, and wrestle in my own style and feeling. In Russia, there are many ministers of sports who make suggestions on style that must be followed-or else. I have family there still, and I miss them, but someday, perhaps with better glasnost, I can return home to visit and not worry about problems between me and Uncle Ivan."

Q: "This question is about Kevin and



Kerry Von Erich: Do they ever worry that their tag team collaboration will be a hindrance to their solo aspirations? That is to say,

- what would happen if they were pitted against each other for the World Class heavyweight title?"— Lori Schack, Berkeley, CA
- A: Veteran reporter Matt Brock responds: "Hell, Kerry and Kevin's World Class tag title didn't keep Kerry from winning the World Class belt from Al Perez! And now that Kerry has the belt, he should expect that Kevin will want a title shot against him. And there's no question in my mind that he deserves it, too. But there's a problem in that with a Kerry-Kevin match, one Von Erich has to lose. Considering the love of the Texas fans for that family, any notch in the loss column is tragic. For that reason, I don't think we'll ever see the match, even though it'd be a genuine classic."
- Q: "I have a question for six-time former NWA world champion Lou Thesz: As a true wrestling legend you must certainly have an opinion on the state of the game as it stands now. What is that opinion?"—Amy Grossberg, Brownsville, TX

\*\*\*

A: "Well, you know that I built my illustrious career on scientific skills and well-timed holds," Thesz replied. "Nowadays, you're lucky if you ever see a successful sleeperhold, a short-armscissors, or a stepover toehold. You see, those classic holds demand not only strength, but the skill and finesse to use them effectively. This is not just throwing a guy against the ring ropes as hard as you can and then kicking him in the midsection on the rebound. I'm talking about skill here. Sure, a strongman like Ultimate Warrior can power his way to a win, but the man is easily baffled by a quick array of scientific moves. There's too much flash and not enough substance today. I really think that, in general, wrestlers today are no match for the great grapplers of the past. I mean, a guy like Bruno Sammartino has

(Continued on page 44)



Although he misses his Russian homeland, Nikita Koloff says he loves life in America too much to go back permanently. That's quite a change from when Koloff first came to this country.

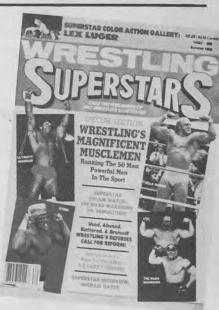
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# Each Issue, The Wrestler will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.



Thumbs Up to Owen Hart. He wasn't at WrestleMania IV, but young Owen Hart, 1987's "Rookie of the Year," represents the future of the WWF. In March, the scientific master from Calgary defeated Barry Horowitz in a thrilling match in Bristol, Tennessee, and turned in a gallant battle the following evening against the stronger and more experienced Hercules Hernandez. Owen dazzled Hernandez—and the crowd in Winston-Salem, North Carolina—with his incredible aerial skills. After 10 minutes, he got caught in a backbreaker and the ref called for the bell prematurely. Despite the controversy, Owen had arrived!



Thumbs Up to Vince McMahon Jr. We overlooked the WWF head last month when we praised Bruiser Brody and Nikita Koloff for their charitable actions, but McMahon must be commended for "giving away the gate" at a special morning charity card at Madison Square Garden. Over 5,000 handicapped children saw WWF stars Hacksaw Duggan, Dino Bravo, Demolition, Jake Roberts, The Ultimate Warrior, Harley Race, and Bam Bam Bigelow—and it was all for free. Such actions are beyond the call of duty and prove that the WWF isn't only interested in the almighty dollar. We're sure these kids had a great time!



Thumbs Up to Al Perez. The World Class is a growing federation once again, but moving to the NWA will give Perez a chance to win the World title. This outstanding scientific rulebreaker showed off his vast skills while he was WCCW heavyweight champ, and was already contemplating a move to the NWA when he lost the belt to Kerry Von Erich. With manager Gary Hart at his side, Perez can live up to his incredible potential in the NWA. First up on the Perez hit list: U.S. champion Dusty Rhodes. But we're looking forward to a Perez-Ric Flair title series. What a war that would be!



Thumbs Up to Kerry Von Erich. The Von Erich brothers have been taught all their lives to forgive and forget, and it's never been more apparent that Kerry heeded these lessons than in recent incidents involving Michael Hayes. The Von Erichs have had a long war with The Freebirds, and in December, Terry Gordy and Buddy Roberts helped injure Fritz Von Erich. Hayes wasn't there, but he has always been the ringleader of the 'Birds. But Kerry has seen a change of heart on Hayes' part. He's willing to forgive and forget. As Kerry continues to come to Hayes' aid, he grows bigger in our eyes.

# Thumbs Down



Thumbs Down to J.J. Dillon. It's been over seven months since Dillon's been included in our monthly "Roll Call of Shame," but this evil manager is always ready to strike at any moment with another disgraceful action. Don't be fooled—Dillon's always up to no good! He's sickening slime, a mean-hearted individual who can't keep his shoes on. Ric Flair's World title is unquestionably tarnished by Dillon's constant interference, and we can only gloat a bit at the fact that his attempted interference against Lex Luger and Barry Windham cost Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson the World tag belts. They deserved to lose.



Thumbs Down to Eddie Gilbert. You're a sick man, Gilbert, and you're no "Hot Stuff" in our book. Who gave you the right to take over the CWA the way you have? Who gave you the right to infringe on announcer Lance Russell's air time? And who gave you the right to tell Jerry Jarrett what matches he should promote? Throwing fire in Jerry Lawler's face was a horrendous deed. Doing it to Mr. Jarrett was an act of outright cowardice! How can you look at yourself in the mirror? How can Missy Hyatt proudly call you her husband? We're amazed! We're confused! We'd like to throw up!



Thumbs Down to Sir Oliver Humperdink. This veteran manager has been a major disappointment since he arrived in the WWF last summer and took Bam Bam Bigelow under his wing. We thought the Bigelow-Humperdink combination would lead to the World title, but thanks to Sir Oliver's mismanagement, Bam Bam has only gone backward. Instead of trying to expand Bigelow's repertoire, Humperdink hasn't done anything to help his man improve. The result: Bigelow has been beaten by Andre the Giant on several occasions and is stagnating badly. Our remedy: Bigelow should dump Humperdink—now!



Thumbs Down to Iceman Parsons. Why does Parsons still have a chip on his shoulder? Parsons' behavior in the World Class these days appears to be an offshoot of an incident last year in the UWF, when Parsons and tag partner Chris Adams parted ways. More than a year later, the Iceman is still suspicious and consumed by hate. He's the reason why Buddy Roberts accidentally hit fellow Freebird Michael Hayes during Hayes' March 4 concert in Dallas. Parsons knows that if Hayes came back to The Freebirds he'd be the odd man out, so he remains selfish and destructive. Parsons can't be trusted.

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July 1976/Stories include: Andre, Wrestling II, Inoki, Von Erich.

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December 1976/Stories include: Von Erich, Mulligan, Brody, Funk.

January 1977/Stories include: Brody, Andre, Wrestling II, Mascaras.

February 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Jones, Funk, Von Raschke.

April 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Funk, Flair, Bockwinkel.

May 1977/Stories include: Mascaras, Valiants, Andersons, Sammartino.

June 1977/Stories include: Patera, Putski, Hernandez, McDaniel.

July 1977/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Rocca, Mascaras.



#### OCTOBER 1977

October 1977/Stories include: Rhodes, Sammartino, Flair, Snuka.

November 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Slater, Mascaras, Snuka.

September 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Grahams, Andre, Mascaras.

October 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Backlund, McDaniel, Race.

November 1978/Stories include: Flair, Andre, Ladd, Graham.

December 1978/Stories include: Brisco, Mulligan, Andre, Blanchard.



#### **FEBRUARY 1979**

February 1979/Stories include: Ladd, Flair, Idol, Heenan.

May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Brody, Valiants, Race.

July 1979/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Sammartino, Andre.

August 1979/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Patera, Stevens, Superstar.

September 1979/Stories include: Superstar Gramham, Cyclone Negro, Greg Gagne, Mil Mascaras.

October 1979/Stories include: Flair, Valentine, Santana, Muraco.

December 1979/Stories include: Andre, Graham, Rhodes, Mascaras.

January 1980/Stories include: Race, Backlund, Snuka, Brisco.

February 1980/Stories include: Andre, Flair, DiBiase, Superstar.

March 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Andre.

April 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, Di-Biase, Youngblood, Wrestling II.

Biase, Youngblood, Wrestling II.

May 1980/Stories include: Andre, Mascaras. Bockwinkel. Patera.

June 1980/Stories include: Backlund, Abdullah, Brisco, Flair.

August 1980/Stories include: Valentine,

Zbyszko, Von Erich, Albano. September 1980/Stories include: Ladd,

Patera, Steamboat, Gagne.

October 1980/Stories include: Patera,
Rhodes, Wrestling II, Morales.

January 1981/Stories include: Valentine, Rhodes, Patera, Von Erich.

February 1981/Stories include: Zbyszko, Patera, Iron Sheik, Wrestling II.

March 1981/Stories include: Rich, Samoans, Blassie, Wrestling II.

May 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, DiBiase, Moondogs.

June 1981/Stories include: Sammartino, Piper, Rich, Martel.



#### **JULY 1981**

July 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Flair, Atlas.

August 1981/Stories include: DiBiase, Slaughter, Martel, Idol.

October 1981/Stories include: Funks, Rhodes, Race, Sullivan.

January 1982/Stories include: Rich, Steamboat, Sullivan, Sammartino.



JANUARY 1982

March 1982/Stories include: Slaughter, Albano, Flair, Race.

April 1982/Stories include: Brisco, Armstrongs, Valentine, Santana.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Von Erich, Graham, Rich.

June 1982/Stories include: Steamboat, Reed, Albano, Piper.

July 1982/Stories include: Rich, Sawyer, Flair, Steamboat.

August 1982/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Mulligans, Piper.

September 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, Armstrong, Blair.

October 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rhodes, Santana, Piper.



#### **NOVEMBER 1982**

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Piper, Blair.

December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy. May 1983/Stories include: Samoans,

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June 1983/Stories include: Windham,

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July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis,

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass. November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki. December 1983/Stories include: Mascaras, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko. January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors. March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog. June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.



#### **AUGUST 1984**

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.

September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack. October 1984/Stories include: Flair, Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Bundy.

November 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Von Erich, Piper, Brody.

December 1984/Stories include: Martel, Santana, Von Erich, Steamboat.

January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.

February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.



#### **APRIL 1985**

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Von Erich-Adams, Flair, Tonga & Snuka. May 1985/Stories include: Warriors. Backlund, Santana, Rich.

June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

August 1985/BONUS 4-PG, COLOR SECTION Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A. Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express. October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs. December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

January 1986/20th Anniversary Issue! 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino.

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen.

March 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen-Martel.

April 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Rude, Lugar, Hogan, Magnum T.A. May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von

Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.

June 1986/Stories include: Lugar, Hernandez, Flair-Bockwinkel, Hogan, T.A.

July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.
August 1986/Stories include: Snuka, Buildogs, Freebirds, Warriors, Duggan.
September 1986/Stories include: Fantastics, Adonis, Morton-Flair, Brody.
October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerry, Windham.
November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Orndorff, Von Erich.
December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.
January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvins, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.
February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.
March 1987/Stories include: Windham,

Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.



#### **MAY 1987**

May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig. June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch. July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen. August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord. September 1987/Stories include: Koloffs, Harts, Duggan, Hennig, Hart. October 1987/Stories include: Savage-Honky Tonk, Horsemen, Patera, Kery. November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.

December 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Windham, Lawler, Flair, Beefcake. January 1988/Stories include: Nikita-Taylor, Warriors, DiBiase-Duggan. February 1988/Stories include: Flair, Andre-Hogan, New Breed, Kerry.



#### **MARCH 1988**

March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition. April 1988/Special issuel Starrcade '87, Survivor Series, AWA & World Class. Also: Strike Force, Luger, Rockers.

May 1988/Luger-Horsemen, Hogan, Flair-Hart, Fantastics, DiBiase. June 1988/Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerry, Nikita Zenk

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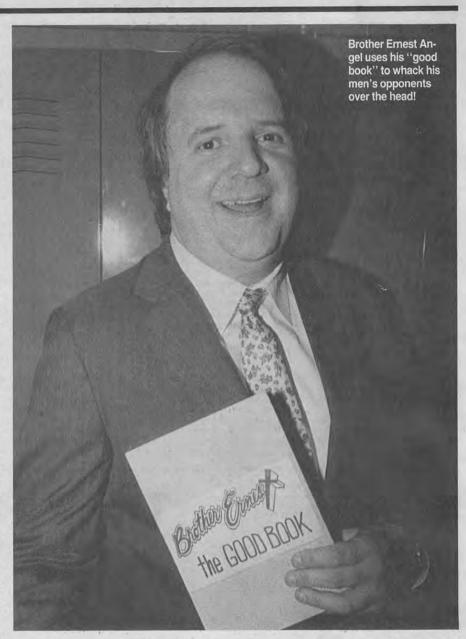
FIRST IT WAS Jim and Tammy Bakker. Then came Jimmy Swaggart. They were spiritual leaders who promised great things to those who followed them, only to see their multimillion-dollar empires collapse in the wake of embarrassing public scandals.

The last thing the wrestling world needed was this kind of trouble. But lo and behold: Brother Ernest Angel, a new manager in the CWA.

This conservative, well-dressed patriarch has taken the lead from the Bakkers and has intentions of building his own theme park, hotel, and restaurant complex, tentatively called "Wrestling Village U.S.A." He's actually seeking donations to help pay for its construction!

"Brother, Wrestling U.S.A. consists of my own property," says Angel, whose past remains somewhat of a mystery, but whose style closely resembles that of a polished television evangelist. "It's going to have a 22-story hotel, a fine restaurant, and a wonderful park for the whole family. We're going to offer time sharing to the fans real soon. Everyone will want to be part of our coalition."

Angel seems like someone a person could trust in an instant—and that's probably his intention. But how could anyone wish to contribute a dime to Angel after seeing the turmoil he has creat-



ed? This shifty eccentric uses what he calls his "good book" to aid his wrestlers—by hitting their opponents over the head with it! Max Pain and "Gorgeous" Gary

Young regained the CWA tag team title from Ron and Don Bruise with more than a little help from their new leader. CWA veter-(Continued on page 20)

In virtually record time, Brother Ernest Angel has become one of the most controversial figures in professional wrestling. He claims to be a peace-loving man who wants to open a "Wrestling Village U.S.A." theme park. But it hasn't taken long for the CWA to realize that Angel is not heaven sent!

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Slant-Eyed Slaughter

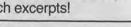
(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Wendi Richter & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Okumura
- Nancy Kumi vs. Lucy Kayama
- Monster Ripper & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Mimi Hagiwara
- · "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Tarantula
- · "Crush Girl" Lioness Asuka vs. "Crush Girl" Chiqusa Nagayo

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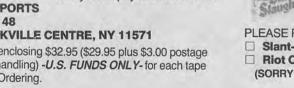
SPECIAL NOTE: These tapes, distributed by Powersports Video in association with American Video, are being sold exclusively for a limited time only in the United States by T.V. Sports. Both tapes include English play-by-play commentary recorded alongside the original Japanese commentary and crowd noise. While the English commentary is poor, the action level and match quality of these bouts more than makes up for it. We're convinced you'll be completely satisfied by these programs.

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#### INTRODUCING

(Continued from page 18)

an Brickhouse Brown has also been aided by Angel.

Even after such transgressions, it is Angel's scandalous comments and quasi-religious demeanor on his "Quiet Time" interview segments that have CWA fans in an unholy row.

"Angel's first appearance on our show brought a record number of anary telphone calls, telegrams, and letters," said Lance Russell, the veteran host of Memphis wrestling. "The fans can't stomach him. I mean, he claims to have 'saved the souls' of Young and Pain, then he goes and breaks every rule possible. His interview segments have reached new lows in pandering. After all that has happened recently in the world of TV evangelists. I don't blame the fans for being outraged. This man is a fraud."

"That heathen Russell has not seen the light," responds Angel. "Our park will feature a retirement center, and we've been trying to get brother Russell to buy into it right away. He'd be a fool not to take advantage of our pre-construction prices."

sides at the site of Wrestling Village U.S.A.—he gives no specific location-and says he joined the CWA because of a recent "spiritual experience." He has never been involved in the sport in any capacity before this.

"I received a calling and a vision one day, brother," he said with his ever-present grin. "I am here to clean up wrestling in the CWA. We hope to strike out miscreants like Jerry Lawler, Billy Travis, and Jeff Jarrett. If people keep learning from Brother Ernest's good book, they will be following the proper path. But people like Lawler just have to learn the hard way."



Angel claims he currently re-Angel has managed Max Pain and Gary Young (top right) to the CWA tag team title, and also guides Brickhouse Brown, who's caught in an armbar by "Nightmare" Ken Wayne (below):

Angel and his followers have attempted to end the careers of many CWA fan favorites. They've been unsuccessful thus far, but Angel predicts he can do it by going by the book-his "good book," that is.

"The good book is full of wonderful things," he says. "It has some stunning revelations in it." But many claim the "revelation" is a slab of steel in one cover.

Despite appearances to the contrary, Angel insists he is not involved with any religious group, and that his good book is not a Bible.

"I am not a preacher, pastor, or ordained minister, sir," he said, again grinning. "I call you my brother because we are all brothers and sisters. Being a member of my coalition is the same as being involved in a fraternal organization; there is no religion involved here. Young and Pain have chosen my way because when you join the coalition, you know you have been saved by greatness."

Since taking Angel as their manager, Pain and Young have emerged as an unstoppable team. "That's thanks to Brother Ernest." said Pain. "I've seen the light because of him. We can't lose with his kind of spiritual guidance."

"Just what we need around here, " gripes Ron Bruise. "First he comes out with all this spritual talk, then he cheats to beat us. I'd be very happy to send Angel to Wrestling Village-in a hearse."

So would most CWA fans. Brother Ernest Angel has done what he set out to do: He's made an immediate impression in the Memphis area. But with most fans and wrestlers calling for his elimination, he may need all the divine intervention he can find just to remain in one piece!

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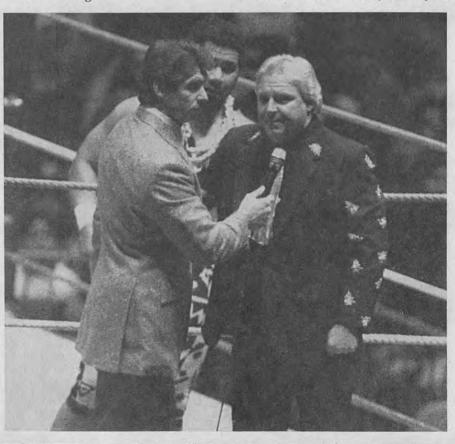
O: Obviously Hulk Hogan is a big part of the WWF's success, but Hulk Hogan isn't going to be around forever. Have you ever wondered what will happen to the WWF when Hogan is gone?

the fans' minds

- A: The WWF can do well without Hulk. The WWF is certainly much larger than any one individual, there's no question about that. The NFL does well with the Washington Redskins and they'd do well without them. As for Hogan leaving someday, it shouldn't be a problem. Hogan doesn't defend the title that ofanyway. He takes sabbaticals sometimes and we still get along quite nicely. Remember, he's not our only champion.
- saving that Q: So you're replaceable?
- A: If there was no Hogan, there'd be someone else.
- O: But he does have tremendous impact on the WWF.
- A: I think that goes without saying. Hulk Hogan is never-ending. He's the only true American hero today. He's a part of the WWF and he is a part of our country like no other sports or entertainment figure. He is

the only man out there that children and adults alike can look up to and identify with. But like I said, the NFL would do well with the Redskins, and we'd continue to do well without Hogan.

- O: Now, you actually come from a long line of wrestling promoters,
- A: That's right. I'm actually third generation. My grandfather, Jess Mc-Mahon, was a promoter, and so was my father.
- O: What do you think are the differences between wrestling then and now?
- A: It's far more entertaining now. The vast components of our productions assault all of the senses, but they do





#### VINCE McMAHON

HANKS TO ONE man, the World Wrestling Federation can now be thought of in terms of before and after. The point of demarcation is June 6, 1982, when Vincent K. McMahon became head of the WWF and changed the sport forever. That year, the WWF was seen on 79 TV stations and 200 cards were held annually. By 1988, there were 260 TV stations, 1000 events a year, four WrestleMania extravaganzas, several late-night network TV specials, and a prime-time network TV special.

Of course, the WWF had always been a successful promotion, but mainly on a regional basis. In 1982, McMahon Jr. changed the rules. He challenged rival promotions and turned the WWF into a worldwide federation. Hulk Hogan became a household name. Product marketing became a prime source of WWF income. Wrestling became big business.

McMahon has his share of detractors. Many claim that he has gained the WWF's high profile with vaudeville-style gimmicks and circus acts. They claim that the emphasis is no longer on the sport of wrestling but on the entertainment of wrestling. Many things have been said about Mc-Mahon but one thing is certain: the WWF has become an incredible success under his direction.

The Wrestler spoke with McMahon at two recent WWF press conferences in New York City: the first, to promote NBC's prime-time Main Event broadcast, was held at the NBC building. The second, to promote WrestleMania IV, was held at The Grand Hyatt Hotel.



and co-hosts a broadcast with Jesse Ventura and Bruno Sammartino (above).

it in an enjoyable way. Back then, there was more emphasis on wrestling as pure sport.

- O: Which is probably the difference between the WWF and the other promotions.
- A: That's right. The others are far less entertaining. What the WWF is is sports entertainment. Whether you're talking about the NFL, the NBA, or the WWF, the most important thing is to entertain people so they'll want
- to come back and see more. We can entertain our fans. We're more conscious of entertaining our fans than anybody else. We have very broad parameters of what we intend to be.
- Q: What would your father think about all this?
- A: (Laughs) I don't know how he'd react. I guess he'd have some reservations. He was a very reserved person, but I think he'd be happy for the fans across America that they

- can all see the WWF, and he'd be happy for our success.
- Q: One of the ways you've changed the WWF is by using music.
- A: Music is a very important item to us. It's been a part of the WWF for a long time, going all the way back to Cyndi Lauper, who got involved from a managerial standpoint. I think it adds to the entire entertainment package.
- Q: You've also recently expanded the WWF into Europe with shows in Paris and Milan. How do the fans in Europe react to the WWF? Are there differences between here and there?
- A: There's really no difference in the way the fans react to us. Indeed, they're very much interested in "The Million-Dollar Man" thing, which surprised me because Ted DiBiase is more of a capitalist character. But in Paris, the fans knew what was going on with all the feuds, and I was amazed. Many people in the world with different attitudes understand DiBiase, which is surprising.
- Q: Prior to his arrival in the WWF, DiBiase was very popular in Japan. He's a very good scientific wrestler. Do you have any plans to use him in Japan?
- A: There's a possibility. Maybe he'll go there sometime in the future. Of course, we're seen all over the world. Our syndication network is quite vast.



A young McMahon joins his father, Vince McMahon Sr., at a press conference (above). In Japan, McMahon presents a trophy to Hulk Hogan (below).



Q: Let's talk about WrestleMania IV. Last year, WrestleMania III was held in a 93,000-seat arena, the Pontiac Silverdome, and it sold out far in advance. But this year, after that tremendous success, you chose to hold WrestleMania IV in a relatively small 20,000-seat arena, the Atlantic City Convention Center. Why?

A: It really wasn't our choice. It wasn't

up to us. The larger arenas, such as the Pontiac Silverdome, the Superdome in New Orleans, and several others, were unavailable for rental on March 27. Besides, Donald Trump made a very enticing offer to us to hold it in Atlantic City. He's helped us make it into a very large event.

Q: Actually, there are rumors in wres-

tling that despite the small arena, the WWF is giving out many complimentary tickets to the card, perhaps as many as 8,000.

A: That's not true. We're giving out hardly any comps.

Q: If that's true then, with the higher ticket prices for WrestleMania IV [top price of \$150 down to \$25], the paid gate for this year could be higher than last year's, when the stadium was bigger but the ticket prices were much lower.

A: That's correct. Our estimated gate last year was approximately \$1.5 million, and this year it should be pretty close to that.

Q: The WWF is coming off an historic event, professional wrestling's return to prime-time network television on February 5 with *The Main Event* on NBC. Now, the ratings were high, but not as high as some people expected. Were you satisfied with the show?

A: Oh, absolutely. We were very much pleased. Any time you can take a show that's in last place in its time slot and take it to first place, you have to be very pleased. We think things turned out very well.

Q: One of the most interesting stories in wrestling is the pay-per-view TV war being waged between the WWF and the NWA. The NWA ran a PPV show in late January [the Bunkhouse Stampede finall, and you ran a live card on the USA network directly opposite. On March 27, you'll have WrestleMania IV on pay-per-view, and Crockett Promotions is running a live card on WTBS, which is available on basic cable systems. What effect did your free card have on their PPV show, and what effect will their free show have on your PPV show?

A: Our cable TV show had no impact on their disastrous attempt at payper-view, and their cable TV show will have no effect on WrestleMania IV.

Q: Why do you say that?

A: Because we're dealing with two totally different audiences. Anybody who (Continued on page 60)

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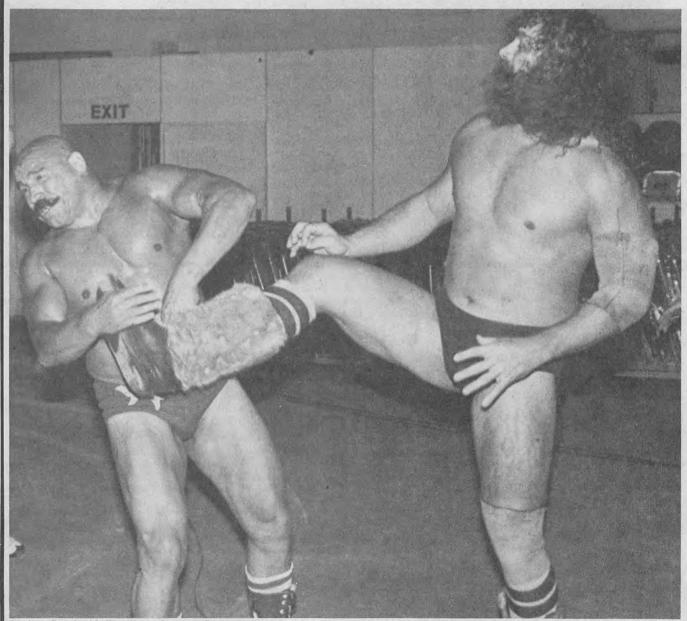
#### THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES



#### BRUISER BRODY

THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts will offer their candid opinions of one of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and-coming ster or an established superstar in his own right.

youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal



Bruiser Brody (delivering a boot to Iron Sheik's midsection) is one of the greatest brawlers in the sport's history. He wins almost all his matches because most of his opponents are afraid of him. Never content to settle down, Brody wrestles in any federation willing to meet his monetary demands.



#### CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"I'll tell you, me and the Bruiser go back a long way, daddy, way back when he was known as 'King Kong' Brody in the WWF in the '70s. In fact, he gave the great Bruno Sammartino some of his toughest title matches—even pinned him once, though his feet were on the ropes. He's spent most of the last few years touring the world, but make no mistake, daddy, Brody is still one of the top 10 wrestlers on this big ol' planet, daddy." won them all!"

Capt. Lou Albano, long known as "The Guiding Light," has guided 13 tag teams to an unmatched 16 WWF World tag team titles.



#### LARRY HENNIG

"Not all of wrestling's strongest men are muscleheads. Even though I think he may have lost a little of his killer instinct, Brody still has that rare combination of size, power, speed, and savagery. You could never accuse Brody of being 'scientific' in the way the wimp Gagnes are, but I can't think of a wrestler with a better record against all opposition. He's one of a kind."

Larry "The Ax" Hennig is a four-time former AWA World tag team champion; he held three of those titles with Harley Race.



#### KILLER KOWALSKI

"Brody has always been my kind of guy. He wrestles the way he wants to wrestle, and he goes where he wants to go. While others sweat and fret over gaining titles and building a reputation, Brody's reputation *precedes* him wherever he travels. He doesn't take any guff from anybody, and he can get as rough and brutal as anyone in the sport. Who else has stood up so well to Abdullah the Butcher? He's not afraid to get dirty. I like that."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rulebreakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.



#### LOU THESZ

"What a enigma Brody is. I can't think of what he uses as his finishing maneuver. I can't really define his style, although he's one of the biggest and toughest guys around. I can't get a handle on what exactly he's trying to accomplish in this sport, other than to get into some good brawls. But I do know that Brody is probably the most feared wrestler in the sport today. And he will be remembered as an all-time great."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-round wrestler in history.



#### PROF. TORU TANAKA

"Brody is classic example of American size with little pure talent. Where Brody's talent lies is in brawling, and in Japan he has become a hero to the fans because of his brawling tactics. When he comes into the ring swinging his chain over his head, it inspires fear and sets pace for his match. For that I give him credit—he never lets opponent set pace of match. But he is too concerned with feeling of fans."

Prof. Tanaka, a three-time co-holder of the WWF World tag team title with Mr. Fuji, is currently a successful actor.



#### JACK BRISCO

"There isn't a person I know who doesn't think Brody is one of the best in the sport. That bothers me. When Brody was a rookie, he built a reputation by ripping his opponents apart. Years later, that's what he's still doing. This kind of man being described as a great wrestler irks me. Can you name one of his holds? Can he defeat anyone without punching and kicking? A great wrestler can defeat people by wrestling them. Brody can't do that."

Jack Brisco is a two-time former NWA World champion, and a three-time former NWA World tag team champion with brother Jerry.

# From time to time, The Wrestler will shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. These are unforgettable highlights of the sport's greatest stars, compiled by the largest staff of editors and photographers in wrestling journalism

#### **CHRIS ADAMS**

THE STORY IS a fascinating one.

A British boy named Chris Adams becomes the pen pal of aspiring wrestler Kevin Von Erich. The letters fuel young Adams' desire to be a professional wrestler and he begins studying the science of the mat sport in addition to his existing skills in judo and the martial arts.

Adams would make his pro debut in England in June 1978, putting aside both his interest in judo and his career training in architecture.

After two years on the English circuit, Adams, like his pioneering countrymen before him, came to the United States. After wrestling in Los Angeles and in the Pacific Northwest for several years, Adams finally made it to Texas in late 1983 where his friendship with the Von Erich family blossomed to the point that he was considered to be "an honorary Von Erich."

But friendships in the mat sport can be the most short-lived of all. Within a year, Chris had hired Gary Hart as his manager. This angered the Von Erichs, whose lengthy feud with Hart was still unresolved. To add insult to the Von Erichs' already substantial injury, Adams went around claiming that Kevin Von Erich had used their friendship to hold back Adams' own career aspirations. The bloodiest feud in Von Erich history was on!

Along the way, Adams had realized championship success: he won the World Class American title from Jim Garvin in late '83, and a second time from Kerry Von Erich in February '85. But Chris' bad luck with allies reached



a shocking peak when, on January 27, 1986, his former friend and tag team partner Gino Hernandez, blinded him by throwing an unspecified black liquid in his eyes. The incident sent Adams back to England to contemplate life without wrestling—and, more important, life without eyesight.

Adams made a miraculous recovery. And still, with only partial vision, returned to Texas and defeated Rick Rude for the World Class heavyweight title on July 4, 1986; that reign lasted until September.

Following his arrest and sentencing for assaulting an airline pilot (Adams spent three months in jail), Adams' next stop was the UWF in early 1987. That year saw Adams' friendship problems flare up again as his tag team partnership with Terry Taylor exploded into one of the area's biggest feuds of the year. Taylor's penchant for lateness and apparent laziness during matches—and, particularly, kicking Adams' foot off the ropes which resulted in a UWF tag title loss—led to a bloody and violent war.

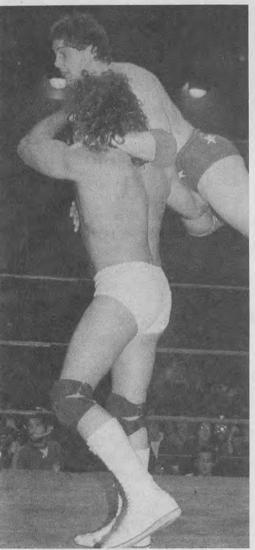
Late last year, Adams returned to World Class—and it looks like the Adams-Taylor war will heat up again, as Taylor is also wrestling in Texas. Indeed, Taylor broke Adams' left hand with a piledriver on February 12, 1988, in Dallas.

With one of the most violent feuds the sport has ever seen ready to reignite, The Wrestler felt it was a good time to examine some career highlights of this important mat star.

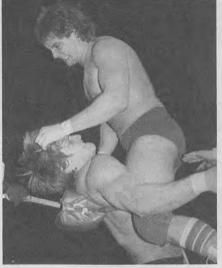


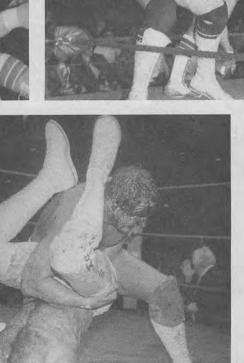


Adams whips Terry Taylor into the ringpost (left). Their feud started in the UWF and promises to be more intense in World Class. Chris is good to the fans now (above), but the fans didn't appreciate his war with Kevin Von Erich in 1986 (below left). Adams executes his "superkick" on Terry Gordy (below right).

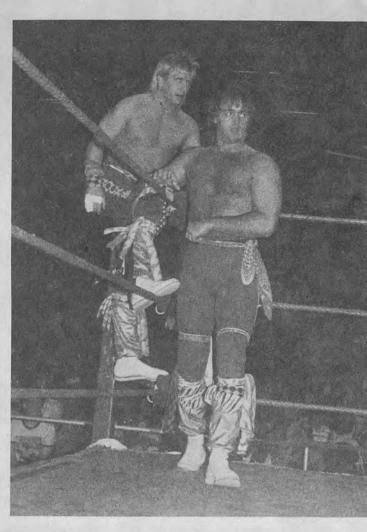


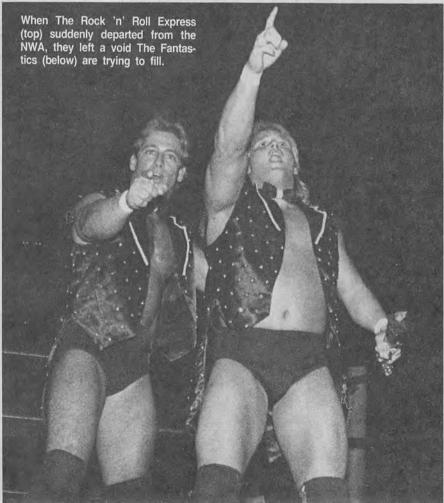
Jim Garvin slams Adams (above). Adams won the American title from Garvin in 1983 and the World Class title from Rick Rude in 1986 (right).





# CAN THE FANTASTICS REPLACE THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS?





TRAINED TEARS for 40 days and 40 nights in the National Wrestling Alliance. On January 26, The Rock 'n' Roll Express suddenly fled from the area, leaving its legion of fans shocked and in mourning. But in early March, the rain stopped. Eyes dried and spirits lifted.

The Fantastics had arrived!

"I never thought there'd be anybody to replace Ricky [Morton] and Robert [Gibson]," said 14-year-old Jim LeTibre of Greenville, South Carolina. "We all know that Ricky and Robert were the greatest tag team ever, and they adored their fans. We were all very upset. But we knew they'd come back one day. Now, even if they don't come back—although I still think they will—we at least have The Fantastics. They're great!"

Jim's enthusiasm over the arrival of Tommy Rogers and Bobby Fulton is echoed by NWA fans across

Photos by Len McAlister

the country. The Fantastics, a highflying tag team with a style similar to that of the Rock 'n' Rolls, are one of the most successful duos ever. They're former Mid-South and UWF tag team champions, and back in 1985 they defeated Dennis Condrey and Bobby Eaton-The Midnight Express-for the World Class tag belts. Now Rogers and Fulton are ready to take on the Midnights-this time Eaton and Stan Lane-once again. In the NWA, anybody who takes on the Midnights is eligible for the fans' adoration.

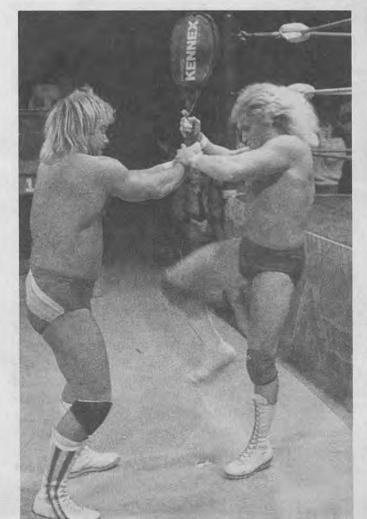
"There's nothing I like better than seeing the Midnights get their butts kicked," said 17-year-old Steve Tracey of Sacramento, California. "Eaton and Lane are obnoxious and they're always breaking the rules, but the man I hate the most is Jim Cornette. He's always interfering in matches and putting down us fans. One of the reasons I liked the Rock 'n' Rolls so much is because I hate the Midnights. If The Fantastics can take their place, they'll be my new favorites."

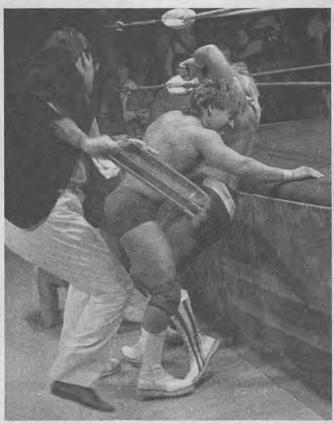
The Fantastics made a brief visit to the NWA back in 1986 during the inaugural Jim Crockett Sr. Memorial Cup tag team tournament at The Superdome in New Orleans. They upset The Fabulous Ones (ironically Lane's former team with Steve Keirn) in the first round, then beat Tully Blanchard and Arn An-

derson, the current NWA World tag champs, in the second round. Rogers and Fulton were finally eliminated because of a double-disqualification decision in the quarterfinals against The Sheepherders, but they'd had their first taste of the NWA's style of wrestling.

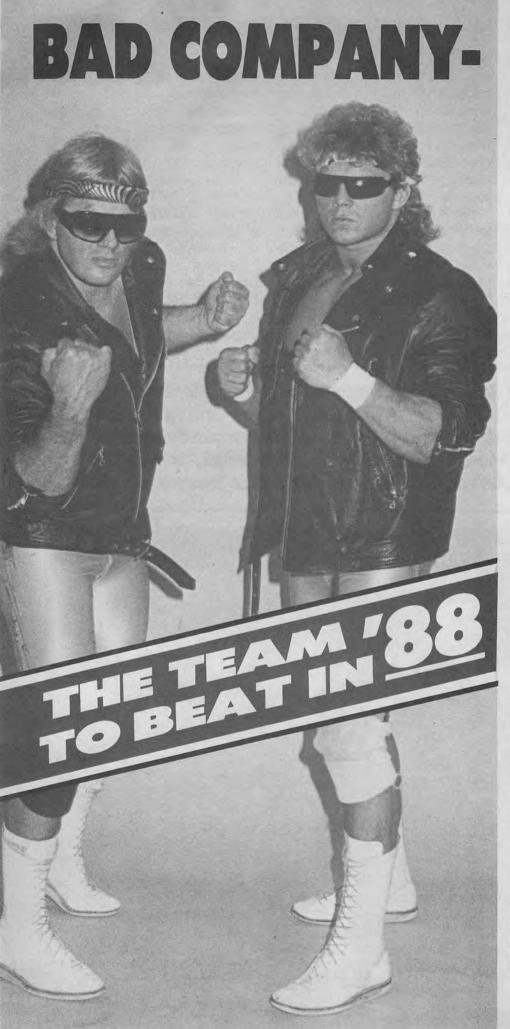
"When Bobby and I decided to come to the NWA this time, the Crockett Cup tournament a couple of years ago had a lot to do with our decision," Rogers revealed. "That proved to us that we could handle the competition in the NWA and, of course, we've already shown that we can beat Anderson and Blanchard. I think (Continued on page 52)

Fans all over the country mourned when Rick Morton and Robert Gibson left the NWA. But a little more than a month later, The Fantastics came riding in to fill the vacancy and take a spot in the fans' hearts. Can they be successful, or will the legacy of Morton and Gibson keep The Fantastics from succeeding?





Stan Lane and Bobby Fulton struggle with Jim Cornette's tennis racket (left), while Cornette shoves a chair into Tommy Rogers' side (above). This confrontation occurred on national TV.



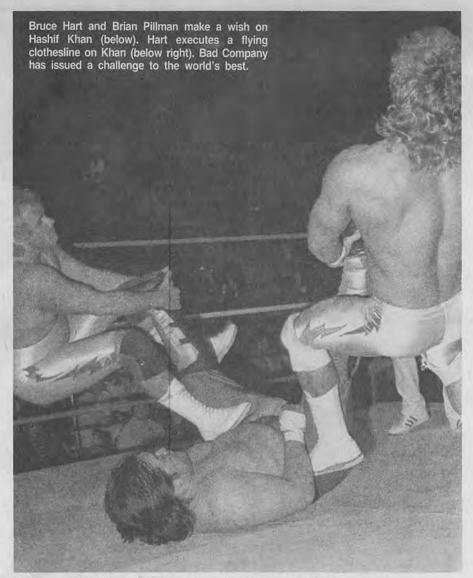
YOUTH AND EXPERIENCE. It's a classic tag team combination. Generally it works, but sometimes it doesn't. Not every veteran can take a rookie into his confidence and make a competitive partner out of him. Not every rookie can rely on a veteran to keep up with him during a grueling 45-minute match.

Bruce Hart and Brian Pillman don't have that problem. Bruce, yet another brother from Calgary's famous Hart family of wrestlers, is a 17-year veteran who knows just about all there is to know about tag team wrestling. He's had many partners over the years, some good and some bad, but none quite as remarkable as Pillman, a man with a stunning physique and a level of wrestling ability far beyond his two pro years.

Hart and Pillman are the Stampede International tag team champions. They're undoubtedly the best pairing in the Great White North; some say they're the best duo in the entire sport.

There are excellent tag teams throughout wrestling, but there's one team in Canada that could be just a little bit better than the rest. They are Bruce Hart and Brian Pillman. Known as Bad Company, they're definitely bad news for anyone who tangles with them!

"I was honored when Bruce asked me to be his partner," Pillman said. "Everybody up here knows the reputation of the Hart family; it's like the Von Erichs in Texas. They've done it all in this sport. Bruce is part of that history. I'd seen him wrestle many times. I'd even thought it might be great



to team with him. So when I got my chance, I was eager to prove that I belonged in Bruce's corner. I think I've done that."

Hart is equally enthusiastic about his young partner.

"Brian is a good student," Bruce says. "He's always working to improve his wrestling. I enjoy teaching him new moves because we both prefer an aerial style. We'll brawl if we have to—and we do—but more than likely we'll beat our opponents with an attack from the air."

The Hart-Pillman pairing is, in a word, awesome. Like another Stampede star, Owen Hart (Bruce's brother), the Hart-Pillman team has been earmarked for future greatness. Their teamwork, aerial skills, conditioning, and pure brawling ability is staggering by any federa-

tion's standards.

Stampede's version of Bad Company, by the way, should not be confused with another "Bad Company"-AWA World tag team champions Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond, a fine team in their own right. Hart and Pillman rose to the top of the Calgary area on November 13, 1987, when they took the International belts from Makhan Singh and "Champagne" Morrow. The Midnight Cowboys-Kerry Brown and Rip Rogers-are a tough team, but have not been a serious threat to Hart and Pillman's reign.

So Hart and Pillman are looking for a new challenge. They want top teams from the WWF, NWA, and other federations to travel to Calgary and face them. They're setting themselves up as *the* team to beat

in 1988. It is indeed a bold challenge—but not one they make lightly.

"A lot of these teams are outstanding in their own federations," Hart said. "Look at [NWA World champions] Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson, or [WWF World champions] Strike Force. They're both worthy teams, but I don't think they really can call themselves world champions until they wrestle all the great teams in the world, and that includes Brian and me. If they want our respect, they'll

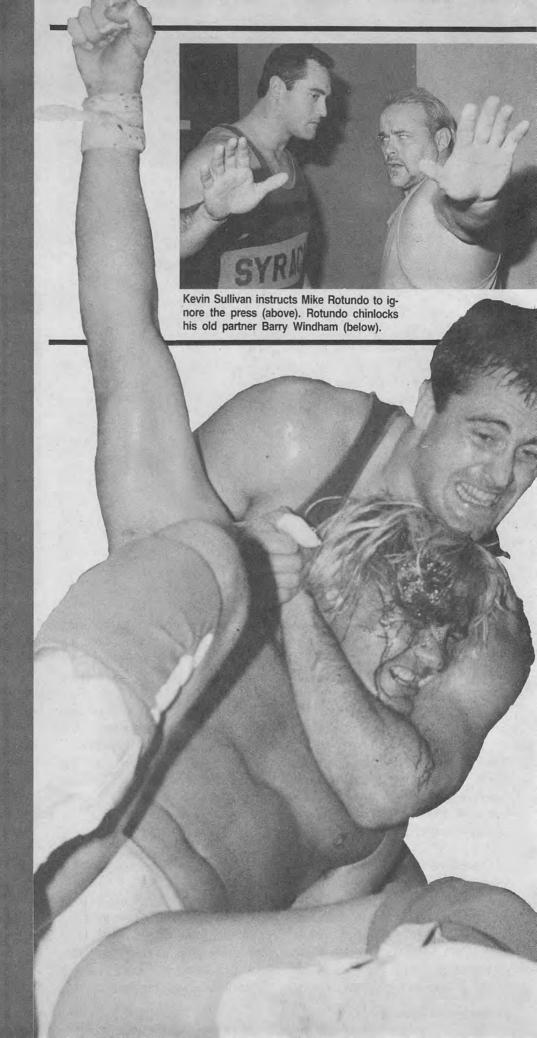


have to wrestle us. If they win fairly, we'll make no excuses. But if we win, they'll have to think twice about the value of their belts."

"We don't care if their titles are on the line," Pillman added, "that's not the point. Let's talk pure wrestling. Their skills against ours. Two-on-two, no managers allowed at ringside. We're not denying that the Horsemen and Strike Force are two of the best teams in the sport, but they should prove themselves. If we met them, we'd have some of the best wrestling you'll ever see. The fans would want it, and we demand it!"

While certainly intriguing, these "dream matches" unfortunately may never come to fruition. The teams of Blanchard and Anderson and Strike Force are contractually

(Continued on page 46)



# BARRY WINDHAM: "Kevin Sullivan Has Turned Mike Rotundo Into A Robot!"

Rotundo remains Windham's best friend. The two have revived their partnership on several occasions and their old magic, the razzle-dazzle that characterized the U.S. Express, was ever present. Windham has encouraged Rotundo to pursue his own career as he himself has done, and supported him every step of the way.

—Pro Wrestling Illustrated, December 1986

BARRY WINDHAM SPORTED gauze bandages on his neck as he slumped back in the ripped vinyl of a booth in a greasy roadside diner. While his tag partner, Lex Luger, enjoyed a hearty midnight snack of steak and eggs off chipped china, Windham was content to stare blankly at his untouched cup of black coffee.

"You should eat something," said Luger, taking a big gulp of orange juice. "You had a rough night tonight."

"Rough isn't the word for it," said



Rotundo sets Windham up for a piledriver. Windham blames Sullivan for Rotundo's surprising attitude change.

Windham, pale and expressionless except for watery eyes. "I think this may be one of the worst days of my life. Lex, they were *laughing* when they attacked me."

Earlier in the evening, Windham had been dragged down the aisle of a wrestling arena by Mike Rotundo, his former tag team partner. Kevin Sullivan and Rick Steiner (who, with

Rotundo, are known collectively as The Varsity Club) were also involved in the attack, but it was Rotundo's involvement that hurt Windham most of all. The trio had wrapped a coat hanger around Windham's neck and used it to render the Texan unconscious. He had passed out by the time Luger finally chased the vicious trio away from the ring area.

"Lex, this is Mike Rotundo we're talking about," said Windham, his voice wavering with emotion. "The best scientific wrestler I've ever known. We were called the U.S. Express, man. He's the guy I teamed with to win the U.S. tag team championship in Florida twice, and the WWF World tag title twice. We traveled and lived together. We were closer than brothers."

Windham stifled a grunt and cleared his throat. "Now this. Are you *sure* Rotundo was the one to put the hanger around my neck?"

Luger nodded in affirmation. Windham's eyes grew wide.

(Continued on page 61)

It was a sad sight indeed when Mike Rotundo and The Varsity Club tried to destroy Barry Windham by strangling him with a coat hanger. One of wrestling's most famous friendships has now disintegrated into a full-scale war—and Windham blames Kevin Sullivan for it!

# HULK HOGAN 500 CERN

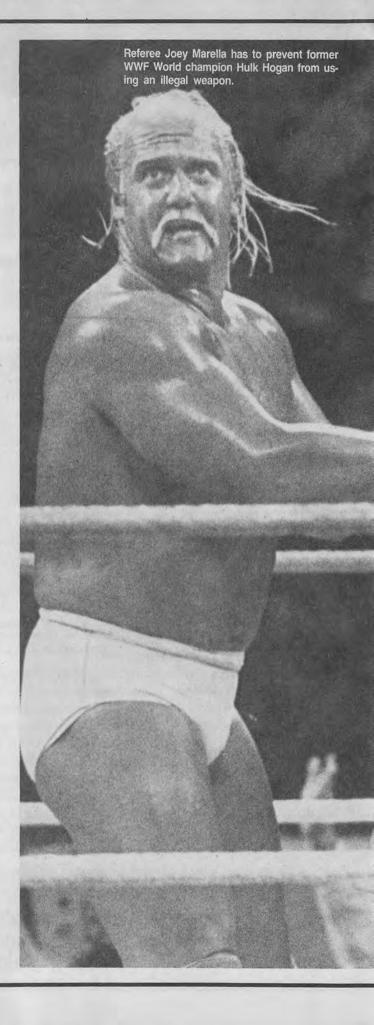
YESTERDAY I CAUGHT my daughter choking her brother in the living room, writes Mrs. Betty Carey of Milford, New Jersey. When I ran into the room, I saw that they had been watching wrestling on TV. My daughter was imitating Hulk Hogan from what she saw on the screen. What's a mother to do? I can't keep my eyes on them all the time. I thought I could trust Hulk Hogan, but I guess I was wrong.

The man who delivers the mail to our editorial offices is a cheerful individual whose daily delivery includes not only letters from our faithful readers, but personal pleasantries as well. Never failing to brighten even the stormiest of days with a smile or a joke, he seems to *refuse* to complain—even in winter, when snow covers the ground and holiday greeting cards cause his mail sack to bulge.

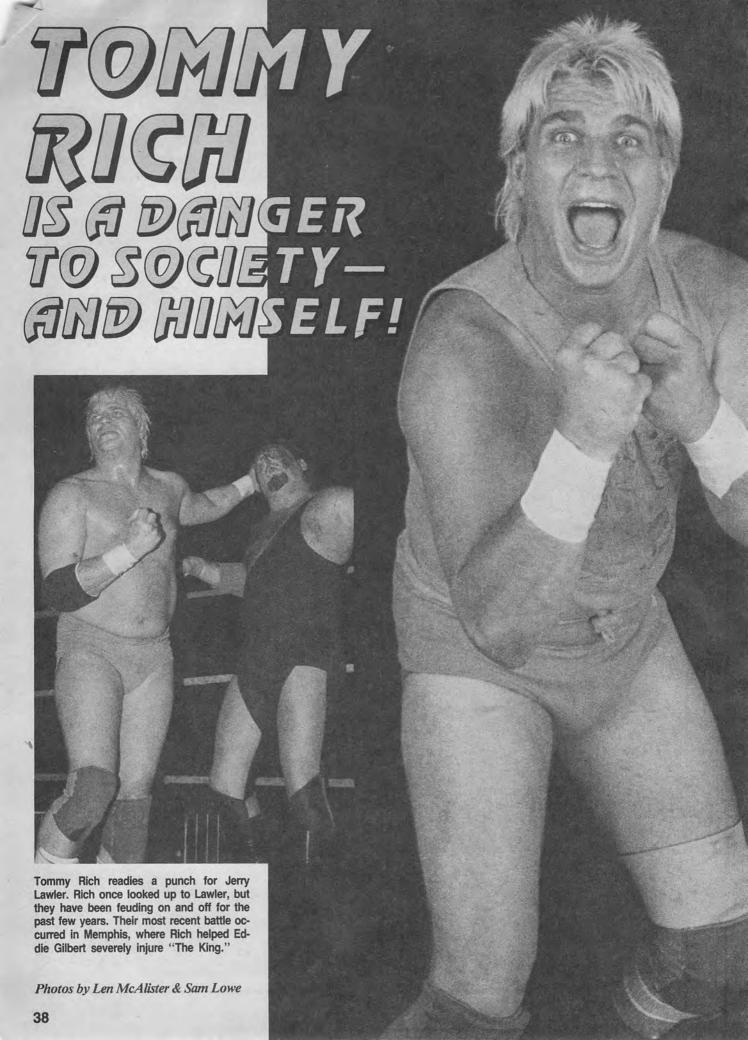
Lately, however, our cheery postal worker has become more and more grumpy with each delivery. Recent events in wrestling, specifically the not-so-subtle alteration in Hulk Hogan's wrestling style, have precipitated a spontaneous outburst of reader criticism—and an unprecedented written response. And who do you think has to carry bag after bag of anti-Hogan mail up several flights of stairs? Precisely. Almost overnight, our mailman, a warm and kind lover of life, has allowed himself to become embittered by circumstance.

Has everyone been affected by Hulk Hogan's fall from grace?

The story is a sad and tragic one. Since Andre the Giant turned against him—and particularly since losing his WWF World championship to Andre on February 5—Hogan has been an angry and bitter man. No longer adhering to wrestling's rulebook, "The Hulkster" is seeking his revenge (Continued on page 54)







# An Analysis By Dr. Sidney M. Basil



Rich hammerlocks Dick Slater. Depending on where he wrestles, Rich is a crowd favorite or a despised rulebreaker.

Noted psychologist Dr. Sidney M. Basil has established a reputation over the past few years as one of the leading psychoanalysts of professional wrestlers. Three years ago, Dr. Basil was commissioned by Inside Wrestling to discuss Roddy Piper's various mental imbalances. Basil continued to work on the Piper case and is considered an expert on this now-retired wrestler. Most recently, Dr. Basil was asked by the editors of Inside Wrestling to analyze Baby Doll. And now, for the first time, readers of The Wrestler have an opportunity to benefit from this man's unique insights. Dr. Basil's latest subject is Tommy "Wildfire" Rich, who recently aided Eddie Gilbert in the near-blinding of Jerry Lawler in the CWA.

ONE OF THE most intriguing aspects of professional wrestling is something that sets it apart from all other sports. I have noticed in several sports, such as hockey, that two players can get involved in an altercation during a game, but afterward they will speak to each other as friends. There is the desire to win, which leads to high emotions and fights, but there is no desire to hurt.

On the other hand, many professional wrestlers feel the deeply ingrained need to injure their opponents, sometimes severely. It is a quite disturbing aspect of the sport, and one that I had the opportunity to examine on tapes of an incident involving Mr. Rich, Jerry Lawler, Eddie Gilbert, and several other parties in Memphis. There is no doubt in my mind that Mr. Rich

and Mr. Gilbert had hopes of hurting, maiming, and, in a deep-rooted but subtle sense, *killing* Mr. Lawler. This fire-throwing incident is alarming because Lawler could have been blinded for life—possibly murdered—and Rich didn't care.

I say this for a fact because, just a few days ago, I had the opportunity to interview Mr. Rich over the telephone. Of course, I prefer a face-to-face conversation when preparing an evaluation, but Mr. Rich refused to meet with me in person. I generally keep subject-doctor discussions private, but as Rich is not a patient of mine, simply a subject for analysis, I feel that the privilege of conversational confidentiality does not apply. I think readers will find this excerpt from our discussion most interesting:

BASIL: Why did you aid Mr. Gilbert in the attack on Mr. Lawler?

RICH: Why not?

BASIL: But you could've hurt him badly.

RICH: Who cares? That's the whole idea, isn't it? Besides, no-body's ever stopped anybody from hurting *me*.

BASIL: Do you think people have tried to hurt you before?

RICH: I know people have tried to hurt me. Ever since I started wrestling, people have been after me.

This reveals a side of Mr. Rich that requires us to look back through his career. As most wrestling fans know, Mr. Rich was projected by many experts, including the editors of this very magazine, to be the sport's next young superstar when he first started wrestling. He most certainly fulfilled those projections in 1981 when he won the NWA World title from Harley Race. But he lost the title shortly thereafter. One reason for that, I believe, is he felt people expected too much of him.

A complete analysis of his feud with Buzz Sawyer would require a much more detailed study, the kind of report that would best appear in, perhaps, the New England Journal Of Medicine, not a professional wrestling magazine. To properly study that feud would take a federal grant, many hundreds of hours of research, and Mr. Rich's own cooperation. I can say with all confidence, however, that the feud with Mr. Sawyer was the turning point of Mr. Rich's career. He has not recovered. That feud brought out an innate bloodlust present in only the most dangerous and primitive animals. It is the main reason why I am able to conclude that Tommy Rich is a danger, not only to himself, but to all of society.

Mr. Rich and Mr. Sawyer were such intense enemies, they literally didn't care if they killed one another. Incredibly, they were not even fighting for a championship or a large sum of money. They were driven only by their hatred for one another.

Note that Mr. Rich says that nobody ever stopped anybody from hurting him. Obviously Mr. Rich feels that somebody could have helped him in his feud against Sawyer, but nobody did. Mr. Rich felt deserted, on his own in the most intense battle of his life, and it's something he never forgot. He stopped trusting people, but incredibly he befriended Mr. Sawyer shortly after their feud ended.

Of course, that's just another side of Mr. Rich's personality: an apparent need to make friends out of enemies and enemies out of friends. Since the end of that feud, he has switched between being a fan favorite and being a rulebreaker several times. Occasionally, he has taken on both personalities at the same time, but in different parts of the country. He is currently a rulebreaker in Memphis, a fan favorite in Georgia, and appears to make the switch with no trouble at all. It is almost as if we're dealing with two different individuals contained within the same body.



Lawler runs Rich into the timekeeper's bell. Dr. Basil believes that if Rich does not seek psychiatric help soon, he will be jeopardizing his career—and his life.



Rich is challenged by his former manager, Paul E. Dangerously. Rich feels that there have been many people in his career who betrayed him like Dangerously did.

Split personalities, however, are another subject to be dealt with in a different medium. But when the vicious side of Mr. Rich is exposed, anything is possible. I fear the day when his vicious side confronts his good side. The battle between these personalities could destroy Mr. Rich—and all those around him.

This is a very sad case, unique to anything I have ever dealt with. During my conversation with Mr. Rich, I recommended that he consider a series of sessions with a professional counselor. Unfortunately, I do not think he will heed my advice, and the repercussions of his refusal are indeed frightening. Denial of a problem generally results in a tendency for that problem to worsen.

I am not saying that Mr. Rich will become a mass murderer, but the possibility for extreme levels of personal violence certainly exists. I wish I could help him.

# THIS MONTH IN...

# Inside Property Control of the Contr



Million-dollar payoff?
Has **HULK HOGAN** paid **RANDY SAVAGE** to crush **TED DiBIASE**?



A toast to wrestling's odd couple:

KERRY VON ERICH and

MICHAEL HAYES join forces in Texas!

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J.J. DILLON sends another horseman to the chair—and World champions LEX LUGER and BARRY WINDHAM electrify the NWA

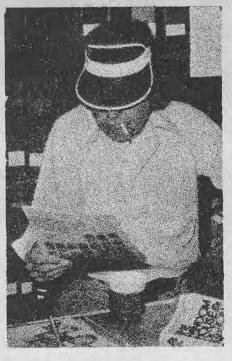
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Ultraviolence in Memphis—Ban EDDIE GILBERT! . . . Bamm Bamm—out go the lights: KERRY VON ERICH'S darkest hour . . . An exclusive Press Conference with BRUNO SAMMARTINO . . . Full-color centerfold plus career biography of AL PEREZ . . . "Media Raview" and "PWI Poll"

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# MATT BROCK'S



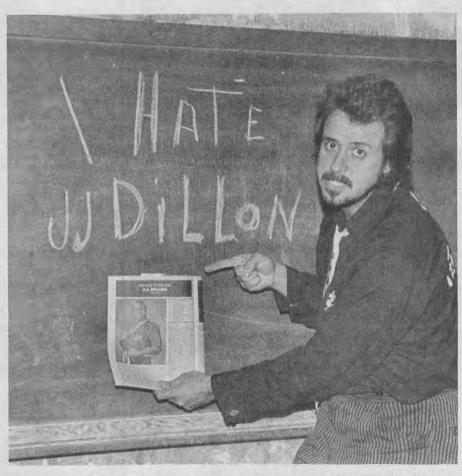
# LOOKING BACK

# June 11, 1984 **Jimmy Hart vs. J.J. Dillon**

ONE OF THE biggest delusions about middle age is that your memory gets worse as you get older. Even after years of logging more miles on my carcass than an 18-wheeler I'm still sharp, although the era of Lou Thesz and Buddy Rogers gets kind of fuzzy around the edges at times.

I took a break from one of my junkets to visit the staff here at *The Wrestler* a few weeks ago. During this rare office visit, I talked with Bill Apter and Craig Peters and Andy Rodriguez about doings in the Mid-Southern area. Yeah, yeah, I know it's called the CWA now—old habits die hard, you know. A rose is a rose, and by any other name Memphis and its environs has always been a great wrestling region.

Top stars like Jerry Lawler, Randy Savage, Koko B. Ware, Terry Taylor, and Stan Lane, among others, have graced this area's rings in recent years, and a bunch of them have moved away from this wres-



Jimmy Hart makes his hatred for J.J. Dillon obvious. The two men despised each other when they both managed in Memphis. Matt Brock recalls their encounter in the ring.

tling hotbed to achieve stardom elsewhere. But it's nice to know some things don't change, too; the CWA still features top-notch action.

Rodriguez said he knew Jimmy Hart used to manage there, and wondered what it was like the few times Hart got into the ring to wrestle. Andy's question brought back a rush of great memories. Hart was dumb enough to don the tights several times during his Mid-Southern days. One of the most underrated feuds of this decade was when Hart and J.J. Dillon, the two most despised managers in the sport, collided in a series of singles matches. Everybody and thought it was a big deal when Bobby Heenan decided to "wrestle" at WrestleMania IV, but he actually has grappling background; the only mat Hart should ever get involved with is the one outside his bathtub.

The whole thing started when Lawler was forced by Dillon to wrestle with the Hart-managed Jos LeDuc in order to get a match against Dillon's Mid-Southern tag team champions, Kareem Muhammad and Elijah Akeem, known as The Zambuie Express. Lawler balked at first, but then realized Dillon's terms were the only way to get his title shot.

Interference by Hart cost Lawler and LeDuc that first match, but they won the belts from the Express in their second attempt. After it looked like Hart and Lawler had formed a friendship, the bottom fell out quickly. Hart teamed with Lawler and LeDuc for a match against Dillon, Muhammad, and King Konga (that was his name then; now he's known as Konga the Barbarian, teaming with Warlord in the NWA). Lawler had Dillon set for a pin, but Jimmy the egomaniac insisted on making the winning cover. Hart almost had a coronary when Dillon easily pushed him off at the two-count, and the runt showed his true colors by running back to the dressing room along with LeDuc.



Dillon covers Hart during their only singles match. Dillon was dominating his lightweight opponent and would have won easily, but Jerry Lawler and Jos LeDuc ran in and caused a double-disqualification.

Left at a one-on-three disadvantage, Lawler amazingly managed to pin Dillon for the victory, but the aftermath left just about every fan in the area wanting to see Hart's neck readied for the guillotine.

They soon got what they wanted. I was lucky enough to be there when Dillon took on Hart in Memphis. With his chicken legs and pretzel-stick arms, Hart made Dillon



Hart, a terrible wrestler, goes for a kneedrop, but Dillon rolls out of the way.

look like The Ultimate Warrior. As a wrestler, Hart is as big a fraud as he is as a manager.

This match won't go down in history as a great scientific encounter, but it was worth double the ticket price to see Dillon pound away on Hart, one of the five most obnoxious characters ever to hit the sport. While I sat in bliss watching Hart get his clock cleaned, the excitement apparently was too much for Lawler and LeDuc, who ran in and caused a double-disqualification.

While Hart and Dillon tangled a few more times in tag team bouts, it was their singles encounter that sticks in my mind. But, to be objective (I mean, look, it was fun seeing Hart and Dillon square off, but I'd hate to see things like this more often), imagine a managers' battle royal featuring Paul E. Dangerously, Downtown Bruno, Jim Cornette, Slick, Heenan, Ernest Angel, Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie, Paul Jones, Percy Pringle, and Gary Hart. Yeesh! I'd rather watch the slow-motion action of the WWF old-timers' battle royal.

Wrestling is sacred, and wrestlers should wrestle; managers should stick to managing.





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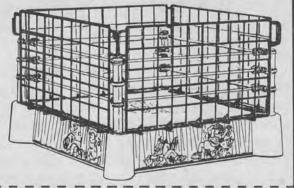


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# YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 12)



Six-time former NWA champion Lou Thesz performs an airplane spin, a maneuver rarely used today.

forgotten more about wrestling than most of today's guys will ever know!"

- O: "When the Hulk Hogan-Randy Savage alliance first made news, everybody thought they would wrestle regularly as a tag team. Since that time, the two have not appeared together much as a team except to help each other run singles opponents out of the ring. What do you think of their 'team'?"-Emily Corse, Boston,
- A: Senior Editor Bill Apter answers: "I don't think much of it at all.



Hulk Hogan congratulates Randy Savage after the "Macho Man's" WrestleMania IV tournament final victory.

They've been unable to put aside their egos and forge a strong team. I have a hunch that the minute DiBiase's war with Hogan ends. 'The Hulkster' will have no need for Savage's help. Vice versa as far as Savage and Honky Tonk Man are concerned. They could have been the most awesome team the sport has ever seen, but they fumbled the ball. It's a shame; ego destroyed what could have been glorious."

O: "To Ronnie Garvin: Ronnie, first





Ronnie Garvin puts Ric Flair in a sleeper. Garvin wants another title shot soon.

of all, I must tell you that I have the utmost respect and admiration for you. Therefore, it is very painful for me to ask you: Why have you avoided bouts with Ric Flair after losing the belt to him at your Starrcade '87 rematch?"-Garv Sick. Rome, KY.

A: "Avoided bouts?" Garvin responded. "Hey, brother, Flair is the guy who's avoiding me. He obviously thinks he's beaten me once, and now he's occupying himself by getting the crap beat out of him by Sting. I'm looking forward to seeing Sting as World champion; I think he's on the verge of toppling Flair over the edge. And I'd be happy as anything if he won the belt. But I'd like a shot at the belt again, too, because I beat him once, and I know I can do it again. Thing is, Flair knows it too, and that's why he won't sign a contract to wrestle me. I always knew he was a coward; this just proves it that much more."

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# **BAD COMPANY**

(Continued from page 33)



Pillman delivers a legdrop to Khan's throat. Pillman, the younger member of Bad Company, is eager to wrestle all the top tag team competition. The trouble is finding teams willing to travel to Canada for a shot at them.

obligated to wrestle the top contenders in their respective areas. Ask the Horsemen about Bad Company and they'll tell you that they've never heard of them, then point out that they have The Road Warriors and Lex Luger and Barry Windham to contend with.

"You're tryin' to tell me that these Bad Company dudes are tougher than a team like the Warriors?" Anderson asked. "Get serious, man. The best talent—for that matter the best of everything—is right here in the NWA. Why should we have to go all the way up to that frozen wasteland to wrestle a couple of guys who have an inflated opinion of themselves?"

Blanchard had harsher words.

"They say we should prove ourselves, but why don't they come down here to wrestle us? I suppose Brucie Hart is afraid to leave his daddy's backyard. He's afraid that when we whip him he won't have any of his friends there to save his butt. C'mon, Bad Company, if you're so bad, come on down here and take us on. We're always ready, boys."

Sadly, the same restrictions that bind the NWA and WWF World champions also bind other federations' champions, as well as many top teams throughout the country. Many promoters are simply unwilling to take the risk of having their titleholders lose their belts to a team out of their federation; indeed, who would have the authority to initiate and sanction title rematches? The promotional logistics alone, should a title change take place, are potentially staggering. Nevertheless, Hart and Pillman are sticking to their words.

"Whether they come here or we go there," Pillman said, "we're the team to beat. They can all complain about how they can't get out of their contracts, but those are just excuses, plain and simple. If they really want the match, they'll be here. We're ready; when will they be ready?"

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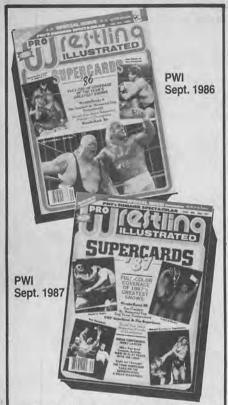
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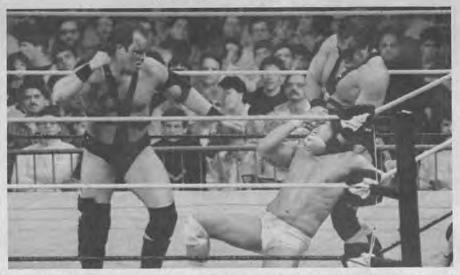
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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 8)



Demolition double-teams Rick Martel of Strike Force. Ax and Smash defeated Martel and Tito Santana to win the WWF World tag team title at WrestleMania IV.

That same day, Barry Windham and Lex Luger defeated Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson at the Greensboro Coliseum to win the NWA World tag team belts. The match was part of the live "Clash of the Champions" telecast on WTBS. Blanchard and Anderson held the belts since August 29, 1987, when they defeated The Rock "wa" Roll Express in Misenheimer. North Carolina.

The end of the match was particularly ironic. Last Thanksgiving Day, Luger lost the U.S. heavyweight title to **Dusty Rhodes** after **J.J. Dillon**, Luger's manager at the time, threw a chair over the top of the cage. Luger refused to hit Rhodes with the chair and ended up getting pinned.

This time, as Luger and Am brawled in the ring, Dillon stood on the ring apron, held a metal chair by the turnbuckle, and waited for Am to throw Luger into the chair. But Luger pulled Anderson back into the chair and sent the Horseman collapsing to the mat. Luger then covered Anderson for the pin and Dillon couldn't save his man before the three-count.

Luger and Windham were teammates in Florida before they moved to the NWA in late 1986.



Lex Luger catches Tully Blanchard in a backbreaker during their NWA World tag title match in Greensboro, North Carolina.

But instead of reuniting with Windham, Luger decided to join **The Four Horsemen**. Luger left the Horsemen shortly after Thanksgiving and resumed his friendship with Windham.

Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond defeated The Midnight Rockers on March 19 in Las Vegas to win the AWA World tag belts. Tanaka and Diamond brutalized Marty Jannetty on the arena floor, then rolled him back into the ring where Diamond pinned him. Moments earlier, Diamond threw Jannetty over the top rope—which is supposed to result in an automatic disqualification in the AWA—but referee Gary DeRusha failed to notice that infraction.

Jerry Lawler finally got back at Eddie Gilbert for burning him in February. With the help of Jerry Bryant, Lawler tossed fire in Gilbert's face while Missy Hyatt looked on in horror. Doug Gilbert had to help his brother back to the dressing room ... The Southern Boys won the Southeast Continental tag belts from Ron Fuller and Jimmy Golden ... Misty Blue Simmes is preparing for a June tour of Japan ... Paul E. Dangerously has added South African madman Col. DeBeers to his "Dangerous Alliance."



Iceman Parsons stretches Kerry Von Erich and goes on to win the World Class title.

Iceman Parsons defeated Kerry Von Erich on March 25 in Dallas to win the World Class heavyweight title. Parsons pinned Kerry after the lights in the Sportatorium went out. When the lights came back on, Kerry was unconscious and Michael Hayes, who was at ringside for Von Erich to offset potential interference from Black Bart. was lying in a pool of his own blood. Terry Gordy and Buddy Roberts, who appeared at ringside just before the lights went out, had disappeared. Angel of Death has been accused of turning off the lights, but several people reported seeing Lance Von Erich in the control area! World Class officials are investigating the matter, but the decision currently stands.

And that's what's happening. See you at the matches!  $\Box$ 

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# **CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS**

(Continued from page 10)

Rochester, NY (Correspondent—Andrew Orantz): "The Natural" Butch Reed squared off against "The Rock" Don Muraco at the War Memorial. Reed was filling in for One Man Gang, and Reed's manager, Slick, was absent from ringside. Both men traded punches and rammed each other's heads into the turnbuckles. Reed tried to execute a flying clothesline, but "The Rock" countered with a bodyslam.



"The Natural" Butch Reed rams Don "The Rock" Muraco's head into the turnbuckle.

Reed then pulled a foreign object out of his trunks and used it on Muraco; "The Rock" stole the object and used it on Reed. The referee saw the object and disqualified both men.

In other bouts: Greg Valentine beat Brutus Beefcake ... Jake Roberts defeated Harley Race ... Davey Boy Smith pinned Islander Haku ... Sam Houston mauled Danny Davis ... Ultimate Warrior battled Hercules to a time-limit draw ... Muraco won a Bunkhouse Brawl battle royal.

Honolulu, HI (Correspondent—Eugene Espinda): In the main event of this star-studded card at the Neil S. Blaisdell Arena, Ric Flair defended his NWA World heavyweight title against Nikita Koloff. J.J. Dillon, manager



Nikita Koloff backdrops Ric Flair. Their intense rivalry continued in Hawaii.

of the Horsemen, was not at ringside because he'd received a lot of punishment in previous matches and was at home recuperating.

The match started at a very fast pace, with Flair and Koloff exchanging blows. Koloff then threw Flair into the ropes and gave him an elbowsmash in the chest. As he prepared to execute the "Russian sickle," Flair rolled out of the ring.

Flair came back into the ring and took the advantage over Nikita with several chops to the chest. Koloff then reversed the situation and gave Flair a taste of his own medicine. They both tried to pin each other several times, but were unsuccessful.

The match finally ended when Flair pinned Nikita by using the ropes for leverage. The referee didn't see Flair's leg on the ropes, so Flair retained the title.

In other bouts: Dusty Rhodes defeated Tully Blanchard ... Barry Windham beat Larry Zbyszko ... Lex Luger defeated Arn Anderson ... Michael Hayes and Kevin Sullivan were both disqualified ... The Road Warriors and Warlord & Barbarian were both disqualified ... Superfly Tui pinned Farmer Boy Ipo.

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## **FANTASTICS**

(Continued from page 31)



we've improved a lot since then, both as individuals and as a team, and we have our sights set on those World title belts."

The Fantastics will first get a shot at the U.S. tag belts, held by the Midnights. Rogers and Fulton signed a contract for a series of matches against the Midnights and have geared their training toward winning the title. "We've been watching films of their matches since we got here," said Fulton, "and we have a strategy to beat them. It's strange, of course, because the last time we saw Eaton and Lane they were on separate teams. We've had to change our strategy a bit."

At press time, Rogers and Fulton were also preparing for their second appearance in the Crockett Cup: April 22 in Greenville, South Carolina, and April 23 in Greensboro, North Carolina. The Fantastics received a generous seventh seeding in the tournament and plan to use it to showcase their considerable abilities.

"This is the showcase for all of



Fulton executes a legdrop on Dennis Condrey (opposite page), his former rival on Cornette's Midnight Express. Luke Williams knows how tough Fulton can be (above).

wrestling," said Rogers. "Winning the Crockett Cup is the most prestigious thing a tag team can do, and we've got our minds set on doing just that. All the great tag teams will be there, and all the fans will be watching, too. That's very important, because our relationship with the fans means a lot to us. We need the fans behind us."

The Fantastics have had the support of the fans throughout their careers. In the UWF, they were embroiled in a vicious, bloody feud with the hated Sheepherders. More recently in World Class, Rogers and Fulton failed to wrest the Texas tag belts from John Tatum and Jack Victory, despite rabid fan support.

Rogers and Fulton create excitement wherever they go. Although they're respected for their scientific and aerial skills, The Fantastics aren't afraid to get down and dirty with any team. Their feud against The Sheepherders was coated with crimson. Fans appreciate that they will stop at nothing to win a match.

Can The Fantastics replace The Rock 'n' Roll Express? That might not be the right question. Gibson and Morton were in a minor slump when they left the NWA, though they never lost their fan support.

So the question is: Will the fans want the Rock 'n' Rolls to return after they get a taste of The Fantastics?

"I'll always love Ricky and Robert," said Lucy Schwartz of Merrick, New York. "They're a couple of southern cuties. But like they always say, out with the old, in with the new. The NWA needed a change. I love The Fantastics already."

Whether they'll continue to be so widely accepted remains to be seen. But The Fantastics have already dried plenty of tears. The sun is shining again in the NWA.



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# **HULK HOGAN**

(Continued from page 36)

against Andre and Ted DiBiase through immoral and vicious means.

During several matches after the title loss, Hogan has slipped into the uncharacteristic habit of employing a variety of foreign objects to strangle, puncture, and otherwise immobilize a host of opponents. In one recent bout against Harley Race, for example, Hogan unwound the tape that was supposedly protecting an injured thumb and utilized it to choke Race. Hogan was then able to cover his gasping opponent for an easy pin, to the accompaniment of a roaring Hulkamaniac crowd.

And that is the real tragedy.

Up to this point, the nation's Hulk-amaniacs had a leader whose moral integrity was matched only by his wrestling success. But now that Hogan finds himself the center of the greatest controversy the sport has ever seen (DiBiase's attempt to purchase the WWF World belt) and without his coveted title (which he had held since January 23, 1984), he seems to be losing his ability to lead his fans—his beloved Hulkamaniacs—by example.

Hogan is no longer a hero to be worshiped as a steadfast upholder of truth, justice, and fair play. Sadly,



Hogan hammers at Andre the Giant, not allowing him to get back in the ring.



"The Hulkster" takes out his frustrations on longtime nemesis Bobby Heenan.

"The Hulkster" has become a rulebreaker in the wake of emotional turmoil and championship frustration. And he has forgotten that his actions have serious moral repercussions. Hogan is forgetting his importance as a role model.

The man who once told America's children to "eat right, say your prayers, and take your vitamins" now seems to be saying "forget it, it's okay to cheat in order to get what you want."

Hogan is no stranger to the ways of rulebreaking. Back in 1980, long before Hulkamania reigned supreme, Hogan was renowned as wrestling's most hated man, a dubious honor that most Hulkamaniacs ignore in the face of positive attitude changes over the years. But whereas the 1980 Hogan, managed by Fred Blassie, was an evil man with relatively little fan support, the 1988 Hogan still commands the worship of millions of fans.

Should young, impressionable fans worship a man for whom rulebreaking is an acceptable means to a championship end?

Hogan wields tremendous power over his fans. It is not uncommon at a WWF card to see dozens of children dressed like Hogan: headbands, torn T-shirts, wide Hulkamania grins on their young faces. Hogan is idolized like no wrestler before him. A great many children have a strong identification with Hogan, who has a strong history of upholding, quite simply, the right way of doing things. These children could easily become confused and believe that Hogan's current rulebreaking tactics fall into the same admirable category as taking vitamins and drinking milk.

Of course, Hogan feels he *must* get the belt back for his fans. Yet what he seems to be forgetting is that when a young kid sees him win by strangling someone, or sees him attack Andre the Giant from behind, or sees him so much as even *bend* the rulebook, it makes a strong impression. Children look up to Hogan and will invariably do as their idol does.

He may *think* he's getting the belt back for his fans—but at what cost?

A disturbing conclusion becomes evident: Hogan is not concerned about the influence he has over the nation's youth. Apparently, he is more concerned with his own hunger for the title than with the image he sets for his fans.

In a recent interview published in our sister publication *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, Hogan told a story about a fan he met, a "little teeny Hulkamaniac in a wheelchair."

"I went up to him," Hogan said, "and he said to me, 'You know something, Mr. Hogan, we have no more role models left in this country. There are no heroes left. They're all doing drugs or getting involved in sex scandals. You're the last American hero."

Hogan should heed the advice of that young fan. He may think that he's setting a fine example for his fans, and he may think that his fans continue to be behind him—no matter what he does. But our mail—and a close look at the facts—indicates otherwise.

Hulkamania is running wild. A little too wild.

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September 1979/Flair-McDaniel, Garvin, Ladd, Rhodes.

February 1980/Rhodes-Funk, Race, Spoiler, Brisco.

May 1980/Koloff-Anderson, Brody-Spoiler, Graham, Andre

July 1980/Bruno-Graham, Samoans, Star Wars 1980.

October 1980/Hogan, Flair, Wrestling II,

January 1981/Morales-Fuji, Zbyszko, Thornton, Keirn.

April 1981/Atlas, Flair, Moondogs, Wrestling II.

June 1981/Morales-Khan, Lawler, Slater, Piper.

September 1981/Backlund-Mosca, Freebirds, Flair, Rich, Junkyard Dog.



October 1981/Rich-Race, Hogan-Han-sen, Moondogs, Freebirds, Putski-Koloff. November 1981/Rhodes-DiBiase, Steamboat, Mulligan, McDaniel, Spoiler. December 1981/Muraco-Morales, Patera, Steele, Andre. March 1982/Valentine, Brisco-Funk,

Steele, Flair, Hayes. April 1982/Spoiler, Idol-Hayes, Morales, Super D. Ladd. May 1982/Rich-Flair, Backlund, Super-star, Dillon, Wrestling II. June 1982/Tommy Rich, Jimmy Snuka, Wrestlers rate each other July 1982/Steamboat-Idol, Albano, Rhodes, Patera.

August 1982/Piper-Rich, Flair-Slater, Rhodes, Valentine, Bockwinkel. October 1982/Funk-Abdullah, Orton, Kabuki, Von Erich

November 1982/Piper, Abdullah, Saito, Von Erich, Mascaras.

December 1982/Backlund-Rose. Rhodes-Flair, Albano, Humperdink January 1983/Rich, McDaniel-Valentine, Patera, Brisco, Bockwinke February 1983/Flair-Race, Morales Rose, Patera, Bravo, Spoiler March 1983/Flair-Bass, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat, Patera. April 1983/Backlund-Graham, Briscos,

Rhodes, Hogan, Samoans May 1983/Muraco, Dillon, Sullivan, Reed, Brisco, Von Erich.

June 1983/Piper, Bockwinkel-Patterson, Brody, Sullivan, Baba. July 1983/Valiant-Humperdink, Martel, Hernandez, Murdoch, Armstrong. October 1983/Martel-Valentine, Mulligan, Lawler, Von Erichs, Bruno. November 1983/Andre-Mulligan, Ka-mala-Brody, Slater, Backlund.

December 1983/Windham-LeDuc Santana, Sullivan, Garvin. January 1984/Andre-Abdullah, Bockwinkel, Gilbert, Windham, Flair, Mosca.

February 1984/Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Han-sen, Martel, Parsons, Von Erich. March 1984/Starrcade '83, Closeups on Atlanta and Dallas cards.

April 1984/Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki, Graham, DiBiase, Orndorff. May 1984/LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins, The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly! June 1984/Windham-Flair, Gilbert,

Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta July 1984/Flair-Gordy, Duggan, Blan-chard, Brisco, AWA tag tourny. August 1984/Rich & Gilbert, Adams-Hayes, Von Erich, Faces Of Wrestling.

September 1984/Flair-Steamboat. Freebirds-Von Erichs-Special coverage of two big cards.

FEB/88 **MAR/88** 

APR/88

MAY/88 JUNE/88 October 1984/Sullivan-Rhodes, Free-birds video. Atlas, Orange Bowl card. November 1984/Von Erich & Billy Jack, Andre, Fab Ones, Summer Wars! December 1984/Rich-Gilbert, Martel, Mascaras, Youngblood, World Class. January 1985/Flair-McDaniel, Missing Link, Backlund, Fabulous Ones, Pro

Wrestling USA, Valentine, February 1985/Sullivan-Graham, Hernandez & Nicola Roberts, Bruno Jr., Steamboat, Warriors.

March 1985/Starrcade '84 featuring Flair, Rhodes, Steamboat, Koloffs, 1985 Datebook, Hayes, wrestling school. April 1985/Von Erich-Blackwell, Haynes-Barr, Hart, Irwins, 1984 in Pictures, Blair,

May 1985/Albano, Freebirds-Flair, Steamboat, Hernandez, Las Vegas June 1985/Pro Wrestling U.S.A, Von Erich, Richter, Windham, Taylor. July 1985/Von Erich, WrestleMania, bloodiest matches, Backlund, Snuka. August 1985/Flair-Nikita, Orndorff, Slaughter, Parade of Champions II September 1985/Adams-Von Erich, Omdorff, Sawyer, Kamala, Barr October 1985/Martel-Hayes, Richter, Savage, Adams, T.A., Warriors. November 1985/Freebirds-Warriors, Mid-South, Haynes, Rhodes, Savage. December 1985/Hogan, Zbyszko-Mar-tel, Murdoch, Dillon, fiendish faces. January 1986/Savage-Santana, Abdullah, Humongous, Von Raschke, Comiskey Park, Taylor.

February 1986/Junkyard Dog, Rude, Patrick, Garvin, Reed, Datebook. March 1986/Starrcade '85, Ventura, Windham, Sunshine, Slaughter. April 1986/Savage-Hogan, Martel-Han-sen, 1985 in Pictures, Warriors, DiBiase. May 1986/Sammartino, R&R Express,

May 1980/Sammartino, H&H Express, Sunshine-Hyatt, Slater, Devastating Holds, Hall & Hennig. June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II. July 1986/Orndorff-Piper, Blanchard-T.A., Matches of '80s, Sheepherders, Bockwinkel, Bulldogs.

August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourny, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.

September 1986/Bulldogs, Blanchard-Gibson, Lugar, Dundee, UWF tourny. October 1986/Orndorff, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams. November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers. December 1986/Machines, Fantastics, Warriors, WWF Muchnick Tourn January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fab Ones. February 1987/Road Warriors, Savage, Windham & Lugar, 1987 Datebook. March 1987/Kamala-Hogan, Starrcade 86, Atlas, Williams, Tatum. April 1987/1986 In Pictures, Kevin Von. Flair, Rich, Hennig-Bockwinkel. May 1987/Nikita-Flair, Bulldogs, Albano's career, Snuka-DeBeers, Taylor. June 1987/Hogan-Andre, Hall, Par-sons, Garvin, WWF title history. July 1987/Midnight Express, Savage-Steamboat, Adams, NWA in Boston. August 1987/Nord-Kevin, Armstrong-Flair, Hogan & Patera, Crockett Cup. September 1987/Hogan, Akbar, Luger-Nikita, Summer Feuds, charity shows October 1987/Windham, Bigelow, Bockwinkel, Western States tourny. November 1987/Bash, Honky Tonk, Hart, Sheepherders, Condrey. December 1987/Grappling Ghouls, Hogan-Andre, Luger-Nikita, Boesch card January 1988/Honky Tonk, Garvin, T.A. career, Arcidi, Hogan. February 1988/Rhodes, Strike Force, Rich-Adonis, Hyatt, 1988 datebook. March 1988/Starrcade, Survivor Series, Simpson, Hennig, Zbyszko. April 1988/1987 In Pictures, Tully & Arn, DiBiase, Kerry, Orton. May 1988/Hawk-Flair, Andre-Hogan, Dangerously, Duggan, Mike George. June 1988/Luger-Tully, DiBiase, Ad-

ams, NWA New York invasion.

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# YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 6)

ing stupidity. Not since George "The Animal" Steele made turnbuckles America's newest snack craze have I seen such a lack of intelligence in a wrestler.

3—One Man Gang. See: Bam Bam Bigelow.

4—Bruiser Brody. Okay, so the man has a lot of hair. And if hair was a substitute for God-given brains, Brody would be a world champion! But it's not and he's not. Case closed.

I could go on and on, but I won't. Fortunately these idiot wrestlers are the exception and not the rule. I just felt it was time to expose these half-brains for what they are.

PETER WICK Trenton, NJ

#### **TEARING DOWN DEMOLITION**

I'm writing in response to Mike Nyerges' letter in your May 1988 issue ("Demolition Position"). In his ridiculously unintelligent letter, Nyerges proclaims that Demolition is a world-class tag team. I disrespectfully disagree with Nyerges' naive conclusion.

Mr. Fuji is not a great manager. The mere fact that he has recently split up such a strong tag team as Demolition proves his ignorance. Not only that, but in their individual matches, both Ax and Smash looked uncharacteristically weak. Ax managed to pin Ken Patera—with the help of both Fuji and Smash, while Smash was pinned in his solo bout by a rather aged Junkyard Dog. This is hardly the invincible team that Nyerges speaks of.

Let's see who has the last laugh, Mr. Nyerges!

DAVID KAMP Wendover, NV

#### HOLLERIN' FOR HONKY

Are you people blind, deaf, or just plain dumb?

I am completely spellbound by the brazen way your once-proud publica-



The Honky Tonk Man does his dance for Elizabeth. Reader Leslie Postal credits Honky Tonk for lifting her spirits.

tion is ignoring the current WWF Intercontinental titlist, The Honky Tonk Man. I haven't seen even the smallest scrap of Honky-related news in months! I think you had better update your readers on the feud between Honky Tonk and Randy Savage. As you may or may not know, Savage has been unable, on at least three occasions that I know of, to take the belt away from Honky Tonk. Now Honky Tonk is gearing up for his bout with Brutus Beefcake at Wrestle-Mania IV. Just thought your readers deserved the update.

I've been an Elvis Presley fan for my entire life. I've been to Graceland. I've wept at "The King's" grave. I've rented all his movies. And now, finally, as if to help ease my sense of loss, comes a savior, The Honky Tonk Man. Please, I beg you to give him the exposure he deserves. He's already helped bring me back from the depths of depression. I owe him my life.

LESLIE POSTAL Bellingham, WA

#### SOVIET DOMINATION?

Is it just me or does anybody out there notice that in the last few years more and more Soviet wrestlers are coming to the United States to make a name for themselves? Superstars or Superspies? That's my question.

What are they doing here and why are they littering the world of wrestling, long considered the last bastion of purely American competition? I

(Continued on page 58)

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## YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 57)

submit that the presence of such "stars" as Ivan Koloff, Nikita Koloff, Soldat Ustinov, Nikolai Volkoff, Boris Zukhov, and Alexis Smirnoff are nothing but further testimony to America's lazy attitude toward the Soviet Union's quest for world domination.

As a patriotic American veteran, I am not going to allow this type of "creeping socialism" to go unnoticed. I urge your fine publication to expose these Soviet pawns for what they are. This is not the movies, where the all-American boy Rocky can beat up the Soviet fighter Ivan Drago-this is real life! We've got to stop these Russian wrestlers while we still can! A show of weakness by any American will only encourage more Soviet wrestlers to come over here thinking our streets are paved with gold and our ring ropes made of cashmere! We've got to get rough with these imperialist bums!

> PAUL LIPSON Bathgate, OK

#### LUGER VS. HORSEMEN

I want everyone at The Wrestler to know that I am greatly appreciative of all the attention you have focused on



J.J. Dillon won't let Lex Luger keep Tully Blanchard in a backbreaker for long. Reader Kate Miller doesn't think Luger will be able to overcome the Horsemen.

Lex Luger's step-by-step fall from grace with The Four Horsemen. Your coverage was incisive and dramatic. Not only that, but you have traditionally refused to pull punches, and your Luger coverage was no exception.

In my opinion, Luger is the only man in the NWA who has the combination of raw strength, intelligence, and scientific skills to shut up the braggart Ric Flair once and for all. Unfortunately, The Four Horsemen as a team represent such a formidable collection of wrestlers that it is likely that no man could overcome their united strength. Just as Luger has Blanchard down for the threecount, Anderson bounds into the ring to wreak havoc. And if Flair was underneath a Luger pin, Lex would have to combat Anderson, Blanchard, and Dillon.

I don't envy Luger anything but his guts. As far as his life is concerned, it may not be worth the canvas it's risked on!

KATE MILLER Crozet, VA □

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SUMMER 1984/Color pinups: Patera-Gagne, Windham-Bart, Bundy-Garvin, Koloff-Mosca. Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Flair-Race, Adams-Garvin, Snuka, Idol, Orndorff.

FALL 1984/Color pinups: Haynes-Nagasaki, Kabuki-Kamala, Steamboat-Slater, Blanchard-Colon. Stories include: Hogan, David Von Erich, Flair-Brody, Blanchard.

WINTER 1984/Color pinups: Michael Hayes, Flair-McDaniel, Gilbert-Rich, Haynes-Funk, Stories include: Kerry Von Erich, Martel-Bockwinkel, Piper, Flair-Steamboat.

SPRING 1985/Color pinups: Animal-Funk, Poffo-Gilbert, Nikita-Fernandez, Garvin-McDaniel. Stories include: Warriors, Hogan, Albano, Rhodes, Sullivan. SUMMER 1985/Color pinups: Kerry-Flair, Hawk-

Lawler, Funk-Slater, Nikita-Rhodes. Stories include: Valentine, Windham & Rotundo, Warriors, Flair-Race, Nikita.

FALL 1985/Color pinups: Adams-Kevin Von Erich, Zbyszko-Backlund, Lawler-Brody, Blanchard-T.A. Stories include: Von Erichs, Warriors, Hogan-Volkoff, Freebirds.

WINTER 1985/Color pinups: Flair-Kevin Von Erich, Hayes-Hawk, Hogan-Fujinami, DiBiase-Roberts. Stories include: Orndorff, Warriors, Brody, Shultz, Duggan.

SPRING 1986/Color pinups: Windham-Sullivan, Andre-Bundy, Taylor-Landell, Hernandez-Kerry. Stories include: R&R Express, Warriors, Hogan, Santana, Rude, Williams. SUMMER 1986/Color pinups: Luger-Barr, Garvin-Flair, Nord-Hawk, Missy-Sunshine. Stories include: Warriors-Russians, Savage-Hogan, Kevin Von Erich, Bulldogs.

FALL 1986/Color pinups: Kirchner-Volkoff, Nikita-Hawk, Morton-Flair, Nord-Hennig. Stories include: R&R Express, Luger, Savage, Bulldogs, Hansen, Rude, Williams.

WINTER 1986/Color pinups: Rude-Von Erich, Khrushchev-Mantel, Hogan-Adonis, Bockwinkel-DeBeers. Stories include: Supercards, Hogan-Omdorff, Horsemen, Snuka, Von Erich.

SPRING 1987/Color pinups: Von Erich-Zulu, Roberts-Hillbilly, Morton-Anderson, DiBiase-Hayes. Stories include: Bigelow, Flair, Hogan, Luger, Race, Windham, Hyatt.

SUMMER 1987/Color pinups: Roberts-Kamala, Von Erich-Perez, Morton-Koloff, Snuka-Zukhov. Stories include: Windham, Elizabeth, Superpowers, Williams, Albano, Von Erich.

FALL 1987/Color pinups: Animal-Lane, Bigelow-Inoki, Sullivan-Hall, Ware-Honky Tonk. Stories include: Midnights, Flair, Steamboat-Savage, Luger, Piper, Hogan-Andre.

WINTER 1987/Color pinups: Tama-Santana, Perez-Steamboat, Rhodes-Flair, Gordy-Gilbert. Stories include: Luger-Nikita, R&R Express, Hart, Hogan-Race, Hyatt, Lawler.

SPRING 1988/Color pinups: Jason-Hart, Konga-Sting, OMG-Santana, Von Erich-Adias. Stories include: Warriors, Hogan-Andre, DiBiase, Honky Tonk, Magnum T.A., War Games.

SUMMER 1988/Color pinups: Von Erich-Roberts, Sting-Rotundo, Misty-Dallas, Reed-Muraco. Stories include: Luger, Hogan-Andre-DiBiase, Ellering-Dillon-Cornette, Hennig, Bigelow, Hyatt, Rude.

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# Q&A

(Continued from page 24)

is interested in their brand of wrestling will watch them. Anybody who's interested in our unique brand of sports entertainment will watch us. They have a very small pay-perview universe compared to ours, anyway. Besides, our competition is not other wrestling federations, but other forms of entertainment. I'd be more concerned if there was a good film on TBS or USA opposite WrestleMania IV. We're dealing with a different kind of audience. They will have no impact on our PPV penetration, and we had none on theirs.

- Q: But your USA network show was a success, wasn't it?
- A: Yes. We had a very nice window for that show.
- Q: So what do you think about their decision to run opposite WrestleMania IV?
- A: It wasn't a very smart decision on their part.
- Q: With the increased exposure of wrestling, there are many people who might be interested in how they can get into wrestling. What is it that you look for?
- A: We're looking for young, talented, gifted athletes with a personality that we can enhance a bit. We're mostly looking for stars on the rise, although we do develop some young talent on our own. Bear in mind that the WWF is known for drawing fans from far and wide, and although a potential wrestler must have athletic prowess, when an individual doesn't have the total package, it just doesn't work.
- Q: I guess Jesse Ventura is one of those people who combines athleticism with an unusual personality.
- A: Absolutely. Jesse is unpredictable. Sometimes I cringe when he says some of the things he says, but that's the nice part about Jesse. You never know what's coming next.
- Q: That can also be said about the WWF. Thank you for your time, Vince.
- A: Thank you.

# **WINDHAM VS. ROTUNDO**

(Continued from page 35)

"No, this is all Sullivan's doing," Windham declared with sudden animation. "I remember how he used to ruin people in Florida a few years ago. He's turned Mike into a robot. That's not Mike Rotundo who tried to put me out tonight. Sullivan's brainwashed a champion into becoming a common thug."

Windham followed his former partner's career with great interest over the last year, and he remembered how proud he was when Rotundo won the NWA Florida title last April. Rotundo had abided by the highest standards of sportsmanship to defend the belt. But in January, NWA fans were shocked by his sudden change in attitude: Since when does Rotundo punch and gouge in a match?

Windham knew that something was wrong with Rotundo even then, but decided to let the former Syracuse University all-American work out his own problems. After all, it had been a couple of years since they had teamed regularly, and both were looking for title shots against World champion Ric Flair.

Then he saw Sullivan form The Varsity Club with Steiner and Rotundo. Soon, Sullivan's outside interference helped Rotundo win the NWA TV title from Nikita Koloff.

"I should have done something long before then," recalled Windham. "Since then Mike has had this strange look in his eyes. Have you heard him talk recently? He cackles and repeats everything Sullivan says. Sullivan's brainwashed Mike to such an extent he may *never* recover."

Looking at Sullivan's past, Windham may have a valid point. Sullivan's strange brand of rulebreaking dominated the Florida wrestling scene for most of the early part of this decade. During one period, the Boston native claimed an alliance with Satan, and he coerced many top stars to do his bidding by using mind control techniques; Windham

believes Sullivan has done the same with Rotundo.

"Mike's gone," Windham said to Luger, who had finished eating. "And since that robot is no longer the Mike Rotundo I once knew, I won't feel too bad about seeing him lose his titles. But Sullivan won't get off so easy. His days in wrestling are coming to an end. A madman like him has no place in this sport as long as I'm around. You with me, partner?"

"Like white on rice, baby," said

to cause as many serious injuries as possible—then laugh about it. And their source of humor is causing considerable panic throughout the NWA.

If you ask Rotundo about his runins with Windham, he barely flinches.

"I should have done this a long time ago," he said after a recent workout with Sullivan and Steiner. "That slug Windham just held me back for years. Gamesmaster, you're a bigger genius than Einstein."



Luger, who reached out and shook Windham's hand.

Since that time, Windham and Rotundo have locked up in several battles both in singles and tag team competition. Rotundo doesn't seem fazed in the least that his friendship with Windham—and one of the most successful pairings of recent years—has come to a violent end. In fact, Rotundo doesn't seem to care about anything at all.

That's the way of The Varsity Club. This threesome seems intent to try Rotundo boots Windham in the gut. Windham is now even more intent on driving Sullivan out of wrestling after what "The Gamesmaster" did with Rotundo.

Steiner let out a roaring laugh. Sullivan, who was not exercising, just sat silently, his eyes rolling to the back of his head.

"Just remember, Varsity Club," he said, "we're not finished with Windham yet. Our work isn't done until our foes are crippled."

Rotundo stared blankly. But then, most robots don't show much emotion.

# **BACK ISSUES OF**



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July 1974/Stories include: Garea, Zbyszko, Heenan, Strongbow. September 1974/Stories include: Sammartino, Graham, Brooks, Bruiser November 1974/Stories include: Garvins, Mascaras, Sammartino, Graham. August 1975/Stories include: Valentine, Garea, Rhodes, Sammartino. September 1975/Stories include: Mascaras, Funk, Valiants, Gagne February 1976/Stories include: Andre, Strongbow, Lewin, Brazil March 1976/Stories include: Ladd, Funk, Sheik, Robinson, April 1976/Stories include: Mascaras, Albano, Flair, Brisco. August 1976/Stories include: Funks, Mascaras, Sammartino, Putski. September 1976/Stories include: Andre, Funk, Hansen, Mascaras. October 1976/Stories include: Sammartino, Race, Johnson, Jones, November 1976/Stories include: Mascaras, Wrestling II, Funk, Sammartino. December 1976/Stories include: Stasiak, Rhodes, Bockwinkel, Orton. January 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Brisco, Funk, Gagne



#### **AUGUST 1977**

August 1977/Stories include: Backlund, Graham, Mascaras, Lawler.
September 1977/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Mascaras, Brisco.
October 1977/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes, Backlund, Mulligan.
November 1977/Stories include: Graham, Rhodes, Mascaras, Gagne.
December 1977/Stories include: Andre, Mascaras, Johnson, Maivia.

March 1978/Stories include: Rhodes, Valentine, Backlund, Bockwinkel. April 1978/Stories include: Backlund, Graham, Steamboat, Bruiser. August 1978/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Andre, Hansen.



#### OCTOBER 1978

October 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Andre, Rhodes, McDaniel.
November 1978/Stories include:
Rhodes, Backlund, Flair, Steamboat.
December 1978/Stories include: Sammartino, Rhodes, Wrestling II, Bravo.
January 1979/Stories include: Sammartino, Mulligan, Rhodes, Backlund.



**JANUARY 1979** 

February 1979/Stories include: Race, Sammartino, Steamboat, Ladd. April 1979/Stories include: Andre, Flair, Backlund, Jones. May 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Rhodes, Backlund, Heenan.

June 1979/Stories include: Rhodes, Superstar, Bockwinkel, Backlund. July 1979/Stories include: Rhodes,

Ladd, Valiant, Brower.

August 1979/Stories include: Flair, Garvin, Race, Sammartino.

September 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Mascaras, Strongbow, Garvin.

February 1980/Stories include: Patera, Snuka, Santana, Albano.

April 1980/Stories include: Hogan, Rich, Backlund, Mascaras.

May 1980/Stories include: Sammartino,

May 1980/Stories include: Sammartino Murdoch, Mulligan, Bockwinkel. June 1980/Stories include: Putski, Andre, Hernandez, Keirn.

August 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Wrestling II, Baker, Koloff.



#### SEPTEMBER 1980

September 1980/Stories include: Mascaras, Rhodes, Ladd, Iron Sheik.
November 1980/Stories include:
Rhodes, Putski, Bockwinkel, Koloff.
January 1981/Stories include: Race,
Snuka, Morales, Slater.
April 1981/Stories include: Albano,
Sammartino Jr., Race, McGraw.
May 1981/Stories include: Iron Sheik,
Von Erich, Backlund, Santana.
June 1981/Stories include: Rhodes,
Hansen, Piper, Gagne.
September 1981/Stories include:
Patera, Koloff, Khan, Junkyard Dog.



#### **JANUARY 1982**

January 1982/Stories include: Flair, Hogan, Race, Humperdink.

February 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Flair, Steamboat, Rhodes.

March 1982/Stories include: Rich, Backlund, Idol, Spoiler.

April 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Andre, Von Erich, Piper.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Hogan, Von Erich.

June 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Von Erich, Slaughter, Morales. July 1982/Stories include: Hogan,

Rhodes, Steamboat, Adonis.

August 1982/Stories include: Andre,

Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Backlund. September 1982/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.

October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.

December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.

February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Race.

March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk. April 1983/Stories include: Snuka,

Patera, Kabuki, Rich. May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.

June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.

July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.

August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.



#### SEPTEMBER 1983

September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes. October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon. December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors. March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.

April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham. May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.

June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase. July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.

August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler. September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper. November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors. December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A. January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.

February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair. March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.



#### **APRIL 1985**

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy. May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter. Garvin, Albano, Koloffs. June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera. July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors. August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid.



**AUGUST 1985** 

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September 1985/Stories include: Piper. Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A. October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr. November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette. December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch. January 1986/Stories include: Steam-boat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors. February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham. March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors-Russians, Rude. April 1986/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Rolls



#### **JUNE 1986**

June 1986/Stories include: Bulldogs, Windham-Flair, Lance Von, Blanchard July 1986/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A. August 1986/Stories include: Wrestle-Mania 2, Garvins, Martel, Fab Ones. September 1986/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes-T.A., Adams, Windham. October 1986/Stories include: Flair-Lugar, Savage, Fantastics, Warriors. November 1986/Stories include: Warriors-Flair, Bulldogs, Watts, Adams. December 1986/Stories include: Hogan-Adonis, R&R Express, Baby Doll. January 1987/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Piper, T.A., Taylor.

February 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Piper-Orndorff, Taylor, Flair March 1987/Stories include: Flair, Missy, Luger, Bulldogs, Koloffs. April 1987/Stories include: Windham, Steamboat, Ellering, Duggan. May 1987/Stories include: Windham & Luger, Steamboat, Hogan-Andre. June 1987/Stories include: Piper-Ado-nis, Horsemen, Adams, Hall, Brody. July 1987/Stories include: Danny Davis, DiBiase, Rockers, Rotundo, Andersons.



#### **AUGUST 1987**

August 1987/Stories include: Dusty & Nikita, Hogan, Mike Von, Cornette. September 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Race, R&R Exp., Rich, Honky Tonk.

October 1987/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan, Taylor-Adams, Lawler November 1987/Stories include: War Games, Mr. T, Bulldogs, Rhodes December 1987/Stories include: Freebirds, Rhodes, Magnum, Savage, Perez. January 1988/Stories include: R&R-Horsemen, Hogan, Flair-Garvin February 1988/Stories include: Savage, Kevin Von, Sting, Tully & Arn. March 1988/Stories include: Bigelow, Adams, Koloff, Honky Tonk, Freebirds. April 1988/Stories include: Luger-Flair, Ultimate Warrior, Andre-Hogan-DiBiase. May 1988/Stories include: Zbyszko, Di-Biase, Warriors, Rockers, Fritz Von. June 1988/Stories include: Warriors, Savage, R&R Express, Baby Doll.

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#### TOP10

- 1 RIC FLAIR 243, Minneapolis, MN NWA World champion
- 2RANDY SAVAGE 245, Sarasota, FL WWF World champion
- 35TING 260, Venice Beach, CA No. 1 contender: NWA title
- 4 CURT HENNIG 235, Minneapolis, MN AWA World champion
- 5LEX LUGER 268, Chicago, IL No. 3 contender: NWA title
- 6 TED DIBIASE 247, Omaha, NB No. 2 contender: WWF title
- 7 TERRY TAYLOR 225, Vero Beach, FL World Class Texas champion
- 8 HULK HOGAN 302, Venice Beach, CA No. 3 contender: WWF title
- 90WEN HART 223, Calgary, Alberta Stampede North American champion
- 10 MIKE ROTUNDO 245, Syracuse, NY NWA TV & Florida champion

### TAG TEAMS

- 1 THE ROAD WARRIORS
  Combined weight: 567 pounds
  All-Japan Intl. tag team champions
- 2 BARRY WINDHAM & LEX LUGER
  Combined weight: 504 pounds
  NWA World tag team champions
- 3 DEMOLITION
  Combined weight: 585 pounds
  WWF World tag team champions
- 4 BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE
  Combined weight: 453 pounds
  U.S. tag team champions
- 5 TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON
  Combined weight: 484 pounds
  No. 1 contenders: NWA tag team title
- 6THE FANTASTICS
  Combined weight: 462 pounds
  No. 1 contenders: U.S. tag team title
- 7 WARLORD & BARBARIAN
  Combined weight: 655 pounds
  No. 3 contenders: NWA tag team title
- 8 KERRY & KEVIN VON ERICH Combined weight: 495 pounds World Class tag team champions
- PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND Combined weight: 461 pounds AWA World tag team champions
- 1 OBRUCE HART & BRIAN PILLMAN Combined weight: 437 pounds Stampede Intl. tag team champions

### NWA

World Champion: RIC FLAIR

243, Minneapolis, MN

- 1—STING 260, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—LARRY ZBYSZKO 248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 3—LEX LUGER 268, Chicago, IL
- 4—MIKE ROTUNDO 245, Syracuse, NY
- 5—BARRY WINDHAM 236, Sweetwater, TX
- 6—NIKITA KOLOFF 275, Moscow, Russia
- 7—AL PEREZ 238, Tampa, FL
- 8—STEVE WILLIAMS 265, Norman, OK
- 9—JIM GARVIN 235, Tampa, FL
- 10—SHANE DOUGLAS 223, Pittsburgh, PA

### WWF

World Champion: RANDY SAVAGE

245, Sarasota, FL

- 1—THE HONKY TONK MAN 255, Memphis, TN
- 2—TED DIBIASE 247, Omaha, NB
- 3—HULK HOGAN 302, Venice Beach, CA
- 4—ANDRE THE GIANT 497, Grenoble, France
- 5—BAM BAM BIGELOW 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- 6—BRUTUS BEEFCAKE 273, San Francisco, CA
- 7—HACKSAW DUGGAN 280, Glens Falls, NY
- 8—JAKE ROBERTS 246, Stone Mountain, GA
- 9—RICK STEAMBOAT 238, Honolulu, HI
- 10—THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR 280, Queens, NY

#### AWA

World Champion: CURT HENNIG

235, Minneapolis, MN

- 1—GREG GAGNE 220, Robbinsdale, MN
- 2—WAHOO McDANIEL 280, Midland, TX
- 3—KEVIN KELLY 271, Oakland, CA
- 4—BOB ORTON JR. 245, Kansas City, KS
- 5—SOLDAT USTINOV 265, Moscow, Russia
- 6—SGT. SLAUGHTER 310, Parris Island, SC
- 7—BARON VON RASCHKE 271, Berlin, Germany
- 8—JERRY SAGONOVICH 270, Allentown, PA
- 9—THE GRAPPLER 280, parts unknown
- 10—JEFF JARRETT 200, Hendersonville, TN

## **WORLD CLASS**

World Class Champion: ICEMAN PARSONS 245, St. Louis, MO

1—KERRY VON ERICH 260, Denton, TX

- 2—TERRY TAYLOR 225, Vero Beach, FL
- 3—MICHAEL HAYES 255, Marietta, GA
- 4—TERRY GORDY 289, Chattanooga, TN
- 5—KEVIN VON ERICH 235, Denton, TX
- 6—CHRIS ADAMS 228, Stratford, England
- 7—ERIC EMBRY 225, Lexington, KY
- 8—STEVE SIMPSON 215, Johannesburg, S. Africa
- 9—BLACK BART 261, Pampa, TX
- 10—BUDDY ROBERTS 247, Del City, OK

# Official ratings

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board, Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.

#### **AOST POPULAR**

- **HULK HOGAN** 302, Venice Beach, CA Last month: No. 1 Most Popular
- STING 260, Venice Beach, CA Last month: No. 3 Most Popular
- **RANDY SAVAGE** 245, Sarasota, FL Last month: No. 5 Most Popular
- LEX LUGER 268, Chicago, IL Last month: No. 4 Most Popular
- KERRY VON ERICH
- 260, Denton, TX Last month: unrated THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR 280, Queens, NY Last month: unrated
- **BARRY WINDHAM** 236, Sweetwater, TX
  Last month: No. 10 Most Popular
- 8 MICHAEL HAYES
- Last month: unrated HACKSAW DUGGAN 280, Glens Falls, NY Last month: No. 8 Most Popular
- **JERRY LAWLER** 234, Memphis, TN Last month: unrated

### **MOST HATED**

- ANDRE THE GIANT 497, Grenoble, France Last month: No. 2 Most Hated
- **TED DIBIASE** 247, Omaha, NB Last month: No. 1 Most Hated
- 243, Minneapolis, MN Last month: No. 3 Most Hated
- THE HONKY TONK MAN 255, Memphis, TN Last month: No. 5 Most Hated
- **EDDIE GILBERT** 222, Lexington, TN Last month: unrated
- **CURT HENNIG** 235, Minneapolis, MN Last month: No. 6 Most Hated
- LARRY ZBYSZKO 248, Pittsburgh, PA Last month: No. 4 Most Hated
- ICEMAN PARSONS 245, St. Louis, MO Last month: unrated
- **OTERRY TAYLOR** 225, Vero Beach, FL Last month: No. 9 Most Hated
- **MIKE ROTUNDO**

245, Syracuse, NY Last month: No. 10 Most Hated

#### For period ended January 28, 1988

## **CUMULATIVE RATINGS**

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues-in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only-and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

### SINGLES

1—RIC FLAIR94	points
2-HULK HOGAN88	points
3—LEX LUGER55	points
4-RANDY SAVAGE49	points
5—NIKITA KOLOFF47	points

## TAG TEAMS

1—THE ROAD WARRIORS90	points
2-BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE71	points
3-TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON 67	points
4—THE HART FOUNDATION65	points
5-RICK MARTEL & TITO SANTANA48	points

### STAMPEDE

North American Champion: **OWEN HART** 

223, Calgary, Alberta

- 1-CHRIS BENOIT 218, Edmonton, Alberta
- 2—GAMA SINGH 220, Karachi, Pakistan
- 3—MAKHAN SINGH 380, Saginaw, MI
- 4—STEVE DISALVO 260, Ft. Bragg, NC
- 5—JASON THE TERRIBLE 270, parts unknown
- 6—JOHNNY SMITH 235, Manchester, England
- -BRIAN PILLMAN 226, Cincinnati, OH
- BRUCE HART 211, Calgary, Alberta
- 9-KERRY BROWN 225, Kansas City, MO
- 10-RIP ROGERS 238, Atlanta, GA

#### CWA

CWA Champion: **MAX PAIN** 

350, Iowa City, IA

- 1—JERRY LAWLER 234, Memphis, TN
- 2—EDDIE GILBERT 222, Lexington, TN
- -JEFF JARRETT 200, Hendersonville, TN
- **GARY YOUNG** 240. Houston, TX
- 5—DOUG GILBERT 230, Lexington, TN
- 6—TOMMY GILBERT 251, Lexington, TN
- 7—BILLY TRAVIS 218, Houston, TX
- 8-DON BASS 230, Memphis, TN
- 9—BRICKHOUSE BROWN 225, Winter Haven, FL
- 10-KEN WAYNE 240, Nashville, TN

# CONTINENTAL/USA

Continental Champion: **DUTCH MANTEL** 

224, Oil Trough, TX 1-LORD HUMONGOUS

- 325, parts unknown
- 2—TOM PRITCHARD 220, Houston, TX
- 3-DAN DAVIS 238, Nashville, TN
- 4—THE BULLET 234, parts unknown
- 5—TONY ANTHONY 235, Bucksnorth, TN
- 6-SCOTT HALL 290, Minneapolis, MN
- 7—BUDDY LANDELL 236, Los Angeles, CA
- 8—FRANK LANCASTER 239, Atlanta, GA
- 9—HECTOR GUERRERO 218, Mexico City, Mexico
- 10—THE GREAT KAISER 300, Vienna, Austria

## WWA

WWA Champion: MIKE GEORGE

265, St. Joseph, MO

- 1-D.J. PETERSEN 245, St. Joseph, MO
- 2—MASA CHONO 235, Tokyo, Japan
- 3—BULLDOG BOB BROWN 238, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- 4—RICK PATTERSON 275, Mile High, Montana
- 5—STEVIE RAY 295, Levenworth, KS
- 6—RUFUS R. JONES 275, Amarillo, TX
- 7-KEN TIMBS 235, Atlanta, GA
- 8-VINNIE VALENTINO 241, Albuquerque, NM
- 9—LORD MALITAR 250, parts unknown
- 10-CURTIS HUGHES 280, Kansas City, KS

# RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 135 wrestlers in 12 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Checking the mailbox. There have been quite a few changes on the ratings pages over the past few months. Here's a quick sampling of what you've been saying about

these changes and the ratings in general.

Your new cumulative ratings were an original idea, but I feel the space could be better used to represent two independent promotions, wrote Mike Kozbial of Coaldale, Alberta. But an even better solution would be to eliminate the independent promotions in your ratings altogether. Giving some small areas recognition without representing others seems unfair. The new format might be as follows: Top 10 singles and tag team ratings would become Top 20 categories, Most Popular and Most Hated would remain where they are, a Top 10 for AWA and World Class would go underneath Most Popular and Most Hated, and the remaining two columns would be used for a Top 20 for the NWA and WWF.



The Honky Tonk Man

Eddie Pappani of Gilroy, California, also dislikes the cumulative ratings. I think they will get boring after a while, he wrote. I think you should give a top 10 list of contenders for the NWA's U.S. title and the WWF's Intercontinental title. No other promotion has a title as prestigious as those. Also, I would like to know how Dusty Rhodes can be in the Top 10 and The Honky Tonk Man isn't. Dusty never defends his title, and Honky Tonk defends his regularly."

To answer that question, Dusty has defended his title on a regu-

lar basis, while The Honky Tonk Man generally loses his matches by disqualification. Honky Tonk's pinfall victories are rare and usually tainted. He has, however, held the belt for longer than anybody thought he would. Plus, our Top 10 measures the quality of a wrestler's skills, not the longevity

Wayne Kjelsrud of Rawlins, Wyoming, has his own reasons why the cumulative ratings category isn't a good idea. I don't care what happened 10 months ago. I want to know what is happening in the sport today. Cumulative ratings are good for the end of the year, not every month. I will compliment you on the revolving category. It's the best thing you've done since I've been reading your magazines for the past 12 years.

Jeffrey Osborne of Minneapolis, however, likes the cumulative ratings. In professional wrestling, longevity is the sign of greatness, he wrote. Anybody can stay on top for a month. But if you're number one over a long period of time, that's saying something. To me, the cumulative ratings say more about the sport than the Top 10 ratings.

Rating the managers. We did this last year in the July 1987 issue of Pro Wrestling Illustrated, and it was very well received. Managers, of course, play a tremendous role in professional wrestling, and have much to do with a wrestler's success or failure. These are the best of the bunch rated in terms of success they've enjoyed recently, athletic quality of their charges, and ability to influence the sport as a whole.

#### **MANAGERS**

1-ELIZABETH

Randy Savage

2-J.J. DILLON Four Horsemen

3-JIMMY HART

Hart Foundation, Honky Tonk Man

4—PAUL ELLERING

Road Warriors

5—BOBBY HEENAN

Islanders, Rick Rude, Harley Race

6—JIM CORNETTE

Midnight Express

7—SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK

Bam Bam Bigelow, Paul Orndorff

-GARY HART

Al Perez

9-PAUL JONES

Warlord & Barbarian

10-PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY

Abdullah the Butcher, Randy Rose

Next on tap in our revolving ratings category is the World Wrestling Alliance, formerly known as the Central States area, which operates out of Kansas City. And there's plenty going on in the WWA. Mike George recently regained the heavyweight title from Central States TV champ Masa Chono, and Rick Patterson and Steve Ray captured the Central States tag belts from Bulldog Bob Brown and The Cuban Assassin.

That's all, folks! Now we're going to sit back and wait for some more mail. The address is: "Ratings Analysis," c/o The Wrestler, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571.



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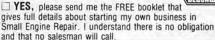
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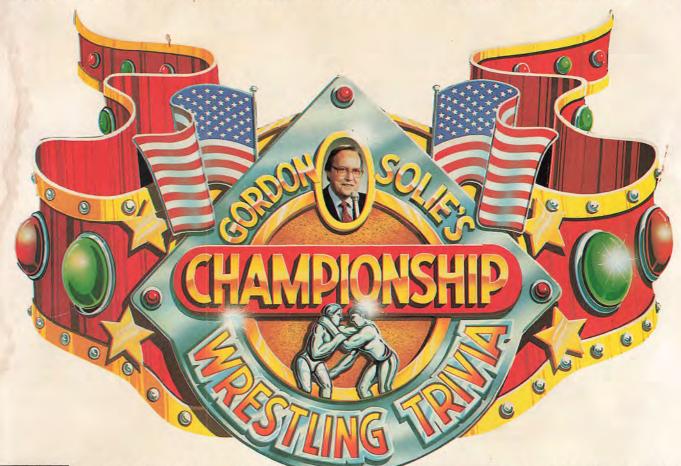


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